

FIGHT RACISM!

FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

Anti-imperialist paper of the Revolutionary Communist Group

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WHO KILLED COLIN ROACH?

Colin Roach died from a shotgun blast in the entrance of Stoke Newington police station shortly after 11.25pm on Wednesday 12 January. The sawn-off shotgun was found lying five feet away from Colin's body. Stoke Newington police say suicide. The black community thinks otherwise. So far 47 people have been arrested in the campaign to get to the truth of Colin's death.

Colin was dropped off 100 yards from the station by a friend, later identified as Keith Scully. Friends say he was in a good mood; he had visited his sister and her newborn child that afternoon, he had been out visiting friends that evening and he was planning a trip to France with his girlfriend.

Scully was concerned when he saw Colin enter the police station, so he drove back to the Roach family home. Mr Roach came down to the station at 12.15am to enquire about Colin. James Roach asked the police where his son was. The police said he would be told nothing until he completed a statement.

The police even refused to answer Mr Roach's questions as to whether Colin was alright. Meanwhile Mrs Pamela Roach was repeatedly phoning Stoke Newington police with growing concern about her son and her husband. The police refused to let Mrs Roach speak to her husband. Mr Roach went through a three-hour interrogation before finally the police told him his son was dead.

The first police press statement claiming that Colin committed suicide was released at 1.30am. This was the story, in the police version, that the press dutifully published as fact. At the very same time that Stoke Newington police were interrogating Mr Roach they were telling the press what to print.

The police refused to let Mr Roach see Colin's body because, they later claimed, this would have been 'too distressing'. Yet that same night the police drove Mr Roach home and proceeded to search through the rooms supposedly looking for ammunition.

The next morning (Thursday) Mr and Mrs Roach returned to Stoke Newington Police Station with Gareth Pearce their solicitor and local councillor Dennis Twomey. The family were left waiting in a corridor because Detective Inspector Scott was 'involved in an inquiry' and

'could not see them'. Dennis Twomey fetched a chair for Mrs Roach to sit on, but was told by the Detective Inspector to put it back. The police told Mr Roach that 'you're muddled, you don't understand' and throughout, as Gareth Pearce puts it, they treated the bereaved parents like subhumans. Pauline Roach adds 'The police have treated us very harshly. It is strange how Chief Inspector Scott had no time for the family yet found the time to sit in front of the television cameras discussing Colin's death'.

The black community has demanded answers to the following questions. The entrance hallway to Stoke Newington Police Station is separated from the reception desk by a waiting room. There are two glass doors which give a good view from the reception desk. So why are the police claiming that no-one witnessed Colin's death? When Colin entered the station there were two plain clothes police standing outside. What happened to them, where were they when the shotgun went off? Why did the police refuse to inform the family for 3½ hours after Colin's death?

The police post mortem report states that the bullet entered Colin's mouth and that there were no external injuries or bruising. So why did the police refuse to let Mr Roach see his son that night?

Stoke Newington police station has a history of violence against black people second to none. Stoke Newington police so brutally tortured Mr and Mrs White in their own home that even Justice Mars Jones was moved to award over £50,000 damages against the police who, because of their 'monstrous, wicked and shameful conduct', should not be allowed 'to escape the consequences of their own acts'. It was Stoke Newington police who attacked Nellie, Jennifer and Janice Knight (see FRFI 25).

This systematic brutality emanating from the filth of



ANDREW WARD REPORT

Stoke Newington police station has taken its toll in the murder of black people. On 5 May 1971 Aseta Simms, a young black woman, entered the station. Within one hour she was dead. On 10 December 1978 19-year-old Michael Ferreira was stabbed by fascists and taken to Stoke Newington police station by his friends. The police had to be asked twice to call an ambulance which took over 20 minutes to arrive. Michael

Ferreira died of his wounds. The police detained his friends until 6am. And in the early hours of 29 August 1982 Franklin Lee died in Dalston while in the hands of the police. His severe injuries led to his bleeding to death. His family and friends dispute the inquest's verdict of 'accidental death'. When are Stoke Newington police going to be brought to account?

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EDITORIAL SHOOT TO KILL IN LONDON

On Friday 14 January just after 6pm police ambushed and shot Stephen Waldorf, very nearly killing him. He was a front seat passenger in a yellow Mini which was at the time stationary in rush hour traffic in Pembroke Road Kensington. He was shot several times without warning by an armed squad of policemen who claimed to be hunting David Martin, a man who escaped from Marlborough Street Magistrates Court on 24 December 1982 after being charged with the attempted murder of a police officer. Witnesses say that after Stephen Waldorf fell out of the car seriously wounded he was shot again as he lay in the road and then 'hit twice on the head by a policeman with what appeared to be a gun'. By luck the driver of the car and the other passenger escaped serious injury.

The *Daily Telegraph* headline, 15 January 1983, 'Police Shoot Wrong Man' was typical of the immediate reaction of the British media to this act of police terror. There can be no doubt that if the victim of this police shooting had been David Martin then these hired mouthpieces of the British ruling class would have found it more acceptable. As it was, so brazen an attempt to kill an alleged suspect in front of so many witnesses could not be explained away. Contrary to previous practice charges were rapidly brought against two of the police gunmen involved as more and more unpalatable facts about the case emerged. These charges have had the immediate and desired effect of making the whole incident 'sub-judice' and silencing all public comment.

Those who treat the emergence of a 'shoot-to-kill' operation on the streets of London as an 'aberration' or 'unfortunate accident' are ignoring, whether consciously or unconsciously, the growing reality of a highly-trained, highly paid and well-armed openly political police force. This police force is being trained and given the necessary powers to defend 'law and order' - that is to defend private property and a parasitical ruling class that lives off oppression and exploitation. As the imperialist crisis intensifies the police are forced to emerge ever more openly in their true role as the repressive force of the capitalist state - one of those 'special bodies of armed men' upon which, in

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Oil crisis threatens international banking collapse

Just as the imperialist nations' bankers were congratulating themselves on their temporary agreements to 'rescue' the most heavily indebted nations of the world by increased lending and rescheduling of debts, yet another crisis has confronted the international banking system. A meeting of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) failed to reach an agreement on international oil prices for the coming period. These countries' revenues from oil production have dramatically fallen as demand for oil has plummeted with the deepening recession throughout the capitalist world. Three years ago OPEC output was 31m barrels a day. Today it is only 18.5m. In the mad imperialist world system there is an oil 'glut'.



Unfinished pipeline in Mexican jungle

A collapse in the world oil prices is threatened as each oil producing country attempts to prevent further falls in revenue by undercutting its competitor and selling more oil. When everything was going well at the height of the post-war boom and demand for oil seemed insatiable, agreement to share in the massive revenues resulting from oil production

was easy - a 'practical brotherhood' of the oil producing countries. Today as revenues fall and many of these countries' economies are being devastated by world recession and massive international debt lent on the basis of high oil income, the agreement has been shattered. It has transformed itself 'into a fight of hostile brothers' (Marx). And this seriously threatens the international banking system.

A collapse of the price of oil would lead to immediate default of some oil producing nations with massive international debts. It would have devastating political and social consequences for such countries. Mexico, with a total debt of \$80bn, with nearly \$60bn owed to the international banks, gets over 70% of its overseas earnings by selling oil. Already Mexico's debt service repayments are far greater than its exports earnings (see FRFI 24). Venezuela, now the third biggest borrower, which owes \$22bn to the international banks gets 95% of its overseas earnings from selling oil. It already pays 95% of its export earnings servicing its debts.

A collapse in the price of oil would force those OPEC countries which have large deposits in the international banking system (mainly from the Middle East with net loans of \$80bn) to withdraw their funds in order to pay for those imports which can no longer be financed from oil revenues. Such a massive jolt to the international banking system could force it to collapse. Finally a massive reduction of oil revenues could lead to a severe fall in export orders to the imperialist nations. It is not surprising therefore that great pressure is being exerted on the OPEC countries, as well as

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MK STRIKES BACK

Following South Africa's murderous raid into Lesotho on 9 December, the armed wing of the African National Congress, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) has struck back against the racist regime with a number of highly successful military operations. Some of these are described below, yet the majority go unreported owing to the strict censorship of news in South Africa.

South Africa's raid into Lesotho left 42 people dead including 27 ANC members. Receiving the warmest response from the thousands of mourners at their funeral, Oliver Tambo (President of the ANC) explained that the ANC would intensify the armed struggle in response to South Africa's aggression and in tune with the demands of the South African people. The crowd chanted the name of Oliver Tambo together with the names of such imprisoned ANC leaders as Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu whilst giving the clenched fist salute.

MK struck back on 18/19 December when 4 bombs exploded at the Koeberg nuclear power station at time-delayed intervals. It was the most important attack since the bombing of the SASOL oil from coal refinery in June 1980. It is the second time MK have attacked Koeberg, one of South Africa's most heavily guarded installations: on 18 July South Africa's nuclear plans were delayed for several months when a fire at Koeberg caused \$150,000 damage.

The attack on 18 December came just 3 days after another attack on a power station, at Ennerdale near Vereeniging. Recent figures show that there have been 27 reported attacks on industrial installations and 33 on railways in the last 6 years.

The attack at Koeberg indicated MK's ability to attack where and when they wish. This was further emphasised by the bombing on 31 December of Johannesburg magistrates court, situated just 200 yards from South Africa's security police headquarters! This court was the scene of the inquest into the death of trade union leader, Dr Neil Aggett who was murdered in prison on 5 February 1982. The bomb attack was a fine reply to the court which had just 10 days previously decided that no-one was to blame for his death and that Neil Aggett had committed suicide. Furthermore, it is an indication of the growing unity between the armed struggle and the independent trade union movement. Since 1977 there have been 15 reported attacks on govern-

ment buildings plus 16 attacks on military and police stations.

It is an indication of the strength of the ANC that it is able to carry out such attacks in the heart of South Africa's cities. In the country areas, too, the ANC is growing in strength. On the borders of Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, white South Africans are abandoning their farms in their hundreds through fear of the people's guerrilla army - Umkhonto we Sizwe.

As the armed struggle in South Africa escalates it increasingly threatens the interests of imperialism - in particular British and US imperialism. The struggle led by the ANC is a struggle which challenges the very system which guarantees profit for the banks and companies of the imperialist nations. As this struggle escalates the imperialists ever more openly take the side of racist South Africa attempting to destroy every democratic movement of the people. Progressive forces in this country cannot stand by idly, but must openly stand by the struggle of the people of Southern Africa to smash apartheid.

Chris Fraser



MUST NOT HANG!

We must continue to fight to save the lives of 6 ANC freedom fighters - Marcus Motaung, Jerry Mosololi, Simon Mogoerane (Moroka 3), Anthony Tsotsobe, Johannes Shabangu, and David Moise (Treason Trial 3) - who face imminent execution in Pretoria, South Africa. They are still awaiting the result of a final petition for clemency by the State President, so it is absolutely crucial that we take action NOW.

The ANC 6, members of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC have dedicated their lives to waging a revolutionary armed struggle to smash the fascist apartheid regime. Like hundreds of black youth, they left their country in 1976, having witnessed the slaughter of over one thousand of their brothers and sisters in the Soweto Uprising. As Simon Mogoerane explained in his trial:

'We decided that it was pointless taking paper and placards, because one would be shot whilst doing so ... I regard myself as a soldier, a person ... fighting for the freedom of his people.'

Having trained as freedom fighters, the ANC 6 returned to South Africa, and carried out a number of successful military attacks.

All six were sentenced in non-jury courts, on the basis of 'confessions' extracted from them, under the most horrific torture, whilst in police detention.

We urge FRFI readers and supporters to:

■ write to the State President, 'President P. W. Botha', Pretoria, South Africa, urging that the death sentences on the ANC 6 be commuted to prison terms.

■ write to the Rt Hon Francis Pym MP, Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Downing Street, London SW1.

■ attend the SATIS (South Africa The Imprisoned Society) picket outside the South African Embassy, Trafalgar Square, every Wednesday between 1-2pm.

Remember it was only the international pressure mounted on the South African government that saved the lives of James Mangie in 1979, as well as Markuse Kateka and Aaron Mushimba in Namibia, and the Kaumba brothers in Smith's Rhodesia.

Ruby Khan

Leeds 24 hour picket Free Nelson Mandela

Rousing singing and chants of 'Victory to the ANC!' and 'Release Nelson Mandela!' continued throughout the very successful FRFI 24 hour picket against Apartheid held in Leeds. The picket, which ran from 6pm on Friday 21 January to 6pm on Saturday 22 January, attracted wide support, despite repeated harassment from the police and other fascists.

Nearly 2,000 people signed the AAM petition calling for the release of Nelson Mandela and collections raised £40 for the African National Congress. Many passers-by, especially the youth, stopped to talk and several joined the picket. Another welcome attendee was Labour MP Ken Woolmer, his wife Janet and their son. County Councillor Harold Best and local councillor Judy Thomas joined the picket for a time, while local councillor Pat Fathers collected money and signatures and sold *Anti-Apartheid News* for 2 hours. Local Councillor John Battle brought welcome food and drink for the picketers and expressed his support. The picket was boosted by the presence of Norma Kitson, wife of imprisoned ANC member, David Kitson. Local radio station Radio Aire broadcast an interview with Norma while Radio Leeds broadcast an interview with Maxine Williams of FRFI/RCG.

POLICE/FASCIST HARASSMENT

During the night the picketers stood firm against abuse and threats from gangs of fascists roaming the city centre. A woman signing the petition was hit in the face by a fascist in the worst of several incidents. The police refused to do anything stop the fascists and completely disappeared when the threat of fascist attack was most

serious. PC 451 told the organisers that they should expect to be attacked by fascists on Friday nights! Police collusion with fascists was shown clearly when a group of fascists threw a brick through a shop window in the vicinity of the picket. A black youth, Charlie Stewart, left the picket to see what had happened. 6 policemen immediately seized him and roughly bundled him into a police van. He was detained without questioning for over 3½ hours before being released without charge.

Soon after his arrest the police told the picket that Charlie was asking to see some of them. This turned out to be a lie and just another ploy to disrupt the picket. Councillor Fathers and a solicitor phoned the police several times and were told various lies about why Charlie was being held and when he would be released. At one point the police even invented a security guard!



taxi driver (!) who had supposedly witnessed Charlie smashing the window. A complaint is being lodged about the incident.

FALSE FRIENDS - NEW ALLIES

The response of the left in Leeds was in marked contrast to the support and goodwill shown to the picket by Labour Councillors and Ken Woolmer. The Communist Party refused to support the picket on the grounds that the initiative came from FRFI/RCG. The RCP came along to Dortmund Square on Saturday morning to hold their own street meeting a few yards from the picket! The picket was supported by a WRP member and 4 members of the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

All of the picketers would like to extend thanks to the councillors who came to the picket and helped intervene when we were harassed and when Charlie was arrested. We would also like to thank Ken Woolmer for his support. Such intervention and support meant that we could continue our picket successfully. A success because thousands were told of the horrors of apartheid and because people joined the picket. The youth especially, showed their opposition to what the British state is doing in South Africa. One white youth wrote in the picket book, 'Let's have faith in people' and his friend added, 'Let's have faith in more people' - this means more pickets in more towns and more work in solidarity with the South African people and against imperialism.

ALISON, CHAS, DAVID AND GARVEY



STREET MEETINGS AND PICKETS IN LONDON

City Anti Apartheid Group continues to hold street meetings every fortnight in Brixton and pickets every Friday night outside the South African embassy in Trafalgar Square. Both events call for the Release of Nelson Mandela and all South African political prisoners. City AAM are planning a 24 hour picket of South Africa House on March 18/19 from 5.30pm-5.30pm as part of the Anti Apartheid Movement's week of action - South Africa - the time to Act.

STOP PRESS EXPLOSION DAMAGES COURT

The provincial supreme court building in Pietermaritzburg was damaged in an explosion on Sunday 30 January. No one was injured in the explosion and the South Africans have admitted that they suspect sabotage. This explosion was the third in a week in South Africa.

On Wednesday 26 January a bomb exploded outside a government building in a black township outside Port Elizabeth. One man was killed and seven people injured. On Thursday a railway bridge was damaged in an explosion at Bloemfontein, Orange Free State, stronghold of Afrikaanerdom.

fight racism

SACKED for opposing police racism

John Fernandes, the teacher sacked from Hendon Police college for exposing the foul racist essays written by police cadets, continues to fight for the right to teach at Hendon. His fight is not only against the police force at Hendon who are doing their utmost to keep him out but he must also fight to get the executive of his union, the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE), to support him.

His aims are very simple. First and foremost he wants Phase 3 to be reinstated into the multi-cultural course unit now being 'taught' at Hendon. Phase 3 deals with the subject of Racism in Society. John Fernandes decided to set up the course after the uprisings in 1981. Hendon police chiefs were very receptive at the time because they were being forced to put on a show that they were trying to reduce the gap between black people and the police, especially since Scarman was going to be poking around no matter how superficially. But as soon as the course exposed the fascist attitudes of the police cadets the Hendon authorities scrapped the course.

John Fernandes wants to be sent back to Hendon to continue to bring racism into the open. Support for him has so far come from his local Kilburn branch of NATFHE and his employer Brent Council. He has been hindered not just by Commander Wells but also by the NATFHE NEC.

Not only have the NEC and police force fought against him but they have joined forces. A secret ballot was held by NATFHE of their membership at the college without John Fernandes' knowledge. The wording was dubious and did not mention his name. The

results have been given to Commander Wells who uses it to support his claims that he was, and still is, justified in keeping John Fernandes out of Hendon.

As well as this back-handed dealing, NATFHE will only support John if he agrees to take up casework once he is back at Hendon College and does not pursue the restarting of Phase 3. Supporting John only if he drops his anti-racist work shows how much this union wants to prevent the racism of these institutions being brought out into the open. They don't want Phase 3 reinstated into the course and to show their disapproval of John they will only allow him back to teach case studies. They view him as the problem, not the inbuilt racism in the police force.

The fact that NATFHE and the police are on the same side against John's fight against racism and for academic freedom speaks volumes. The last word goes to John Fernandes:

'What I am expecting is that my union does not collude with the police. They are colluding with the police and not fighting racism. I prefer they support Brent Council who are supporting my stand.'

Dawn Trent

REINSTATE LIONEL VIDA

On 26 November 1982 the ILEA Teachers Disciplinary Tribunal sacked Lionel Vida, an anti-racist teacher from Catford School, South London. The Tribunal found Lionel Vida guilty on a number of trumped up charges of 'misconduct' and 'indiscipline'. In fact, Lionel Vida has been sacked for exposing and opposing racism in Catford School. Throughout the time he was teaching at Catford School Lionel Vida fought racism in the school, defended and worked with black students inside and outside the school.

Black people in Britain are subjected to systematic racism in employment, housing, social services, the courts and the prisons. Black youth in particular are constantly harassed and attacked by the racist British police. Inside the schools too black students and black teachers are victims of the education system - Catford School is no exception. There is at least a three year history of overt and covert racism in the school. Here are just a few examples:

- A campaign in defence of 19 black students and ex-students who were arrested and intimidated by the police in June 1981 led to Catford School suspending and expelling one of Lionel Vida's students who had taken part in the campaign.
- In the Autumn term 1981, a black teacher was assaulted. No effective action was taken.
- On 26 November 1981, Lionel Vida and other anti-racist teachers proposed formally to submit evidence of Institutional Racism to the school's working party. On 27 November teachers illegally suspended one of Lionel Vida's black students and for-

cibly removed the student from the premises.

- On 8 November 1981, black and white students, seriously concerned about the attacks on their right to a decent education, met with Lionel Vida to propose setting up a Student Council. The boys sought the authority of the Headteacher who, in a memo to Lionel Vida, banned the Council on 30 November, 1981 and suspended the black students concerned.
- On 8 March 1982, in protest at the continuing racism in the school and the constant harassment of his work, Lionel Vida withdrew his labour from the school.

Since February 1982, Lionel Vida has come before 6 different kangaroo courts. At the final 5 day tribunal hearing in November 1982, 19 witnesses sent statements in Lionel Vida's defence and 12 witnesses (parents, teachers, and students) attended the hearing to give evidence in Lionel's favour. The black parents, students, and anti-racist teachers were rudely treated at the hearing and their evidence was disregarded.



Lionel Vida and supporters picketing the school

frustrated and obstructed.

The NUT have consistently refused to take up Lionel's case. NUT officers including Communist Party supporters have blocked a motion condemning his sacking and opposing racism in schools. And now, in the most outrageous act of all, the NUT have sent a solicitor's letter threatening High Court Action against the National Convention of Black Teachers in an attempt to suppress the leaflet being used to publicise Lionel's case.

The campaign which has been launched to reinstate Lionel Vida is supported by the black community. Local parents, youth, ex-pupils, anti-racist teachers and organisations like FRFI and also ASTMS. A black parent explained why she is giving her support to the campaign:

'There is racism in the school and there are racists who have thrown my son out and they have not listened to any of the complaints I have made.'

Support is growing. We have held very successful street meetings in Lewisham and Catford; over 600 people in the local community have signed the petition, and over 200 have been collected to

WORRELL FAMILY FIGHT FOR TRUTH

MY DADDY WAS MURDERED IN BRIXTON PRISON. WHO DONE IT? read the placard carried by Paul Worrell's young son on the demonstration of family and friends outside Brixton prison, one year after Paul's death.

Paul had been denied a bed in hospital and was kept alone in a prison cell for 23 hours a day for four months with Largactil and other drugs for treatment (see FRFI 17). According to the prison screws Paul was 'found hanged' in his cell on 12 January 1982. Hanged, according to the screws, by someone else's shirt and a towel twisted together.

If true, the screws' evidence to the inquest would have meant that Paul died within 5 minutes of their last check on him. Do you believe that? If true, the screws' evidence would have meant that a 130lb man could hang himself with

such a flimsy noose. Do you believe that? The coroner's jury at the inquest didn't. They rejected the screws' version that Paul committed suicide and returned an open verdict.

The Worrell family's solicitor applied for a transcript of the inquest, but it was only after months of pressure that a copy, for which they were charged £98, was provided to the family. This copied transcript missed out the evidence of two crucial witnesses, it missed out the coroner's summing up and it broke off at the very point that a screw was being questioned about the noose he supposedly 'found'. The explanation given for these omissions was that the tape recorder had broken down. Do you believe that?

The Home Office have so far refused the family's demands for a public enquiry or even a second inquest. The Worrell family are fighting this cover up of yet another black youth's murder in the hands of the British state. Paul's mother says, 'We don't believe that Paul took his own life. Even if our requests are rejected again and again, I still won't give up. I know we're not the only people in this position, and I hope that our fight will go some way towards helping others in the same situation.'

AG

FIGHT RACISM IN BRIEF

● Pickaxe police get off

Freelance press photographer David Hoffman was outside Brixton police station during the April 1981 Uprising. There he saw a cordon of uniformed police cordon off the side entrance and a squad of 10 to 20 men emerge carrying staves and pickaxe handles. Senior Officers threatened Hoffman with arrest and worse if he continued taking pictures. So much for the freedom of the press in racist Britain.

One of Hoffman's pictures clearly shows thug PC Woods marching out armed with a pickaxe handle. Despite a flood of complaints the Director of Public Prosecutions decided not to bring criminal charges against Woods. Nearly two years later the outcome of the police's own disciplinary hearing is a reprimand for PC Woods for 'discreditable conduct' and reprimands for two other thugs - Sergeant Jones and Detective Inspector Wallace who headed 'Operation Swamp' - for 'neglect of duty'. Far from being out of control this shows that the fascist activity of the police is not only condoned but carefully controlled from the very top.

● Conspiracy charges on Newham 8

The police frame up of black people defending themselves has taken a serious turn. Children at the Little Ilford School in the East End were subjected to continuous tauntings and racist attacks. The Newham 8 were courageous Asian youth who protected the schoolchildren, and who themselves were attacked by the police on 24 September last year (see FRFI 24). The original charges of obstruction, threatening behaviour and actual bodily harm have been added to with the catch all frame up charge of 'conspiracy to assault persons unknown'.

As it was for the Bradford 12, the police application of conspiracy against Asian youth is a direct political attack on the whole community. Support for the Newham 8 is vital. Write immediately to the Newham 8 Defence Campaign, PO Box 273, Forest Gate, London E7.

● No ethnic monitoring

The pressure exerted by CPSSA members who work in the dole offices has meant that the government has had to postpone its plans to racially check the unemployed. This is a great victory for the people who work in the dole offices. Against vicious management harassment the banning of CPSSA leaflets, posters, and not allowing people who work in the dole offices to have meetings to organise. CPSSA members were able to mount an effective campaign and exert considerable political pressure.

Even though the Government has not officially cancelled its plans to introduce its racist scheme, members of the CPSSA Department of Employment Section Executive are quietly confident that the government will with a little fuss as possible forget about the scheme.

Congratulations to all workers in the dole offices and thanks to all who supported the CPSSA's campaign!

Nigel Doyle

● Ford worker fights passport checks

Mr Athringa Velayudhan has worked at Fords Dagenham body plant since 1973. In November 1981 he had to take sick leave after an operation. During his absence Mr Velayudhan visited his wife and children in India. Then on 19 February 1982 Fords told him he was sacked.

The next Monday Mr Velayudhan reported to the personnel officer who told him that if he produced his passport to show that he had not left the country then he would be reinstated. Representatives from the TGWU and the GMWU also told Mr Velayudhan he had to produce his passport for Fords to check it.

Mr Velayudhan refused to accept this racism and took the case to an industrial tribunal which ruled in his favour. Fords then said they still would not reinstate him because there was a 'surplus in these three shift areas'. Mr Velayudhan is still fighting to get his job back. FRFI condemns the unions' complicity with Fords' passport checks.

pay the campaign costs. In addition, we have held morning pickets outside Catford School, attended by many ex-pupils and black parents.

Despite all the guidelines, policy documents, and manifestos on eliminating racism in the schools, anti-racist teachers like Lionel Vida are sacked for actually fighting the racism in education.

We urge all anti-racists to join the defence campaign, fight for Lionel Vida's reinstatement and fight racism in schools.

Support the events organised by the Reinstate Lionel Vida Campaign:

Street meetings: Lewisham Clock Tower, at 10.45am on Saturday 29 January, 12 and 26 February, 12 and 26 March. Catford Shopping Precinct, at 10.45am on Saturday 5 and 19 February, 5 and 19 March. Picket: Catford School, Stainton Road, Catford SE6, at 8-11am, on Monday 7 and 21 February, 7 and 21 March.

Public Meeting: Tuesday 15 February, at 7pm, in St Mary's Centre, Ladywell.

Lobby: ILEA Education Committee, County Hall, on 22 March.

Lobby: Industrial Tribunal, 93 Ebury Bridge Road, SW1, 23/24/25 March.

LETTERS OF PROTEST TO: Chairman and Deputy Chair, ILEA Schools Sub-Committee, Members Lobby, Rm 155, The County Hall, London SE1 7PM.

Please send donations and requests for further information, petition forms etc to: RLVC, PO BOX 30, PINNER, MIDDLESEX HA5 5HF

Ruby Khan

A delegation from the Precinct Campaign attended a full meeting of West Yorkshire Metropolitan County Council (WYMCC) in Wakefield on Thursday 6 January. Garvey Harris addressed this meeting. In his speech he said:

'At the moment there is no area on the streets where people can exercise their democratic rights and engage in political activity free from police harassment. . . . We were arrested for giving out leaflets, collecting signatures on a petition, selling copies of FRFI and for talking to passers-by. . . . We believe the right to free speech and the right to campaign and protest are basic democratic rights which everyone should enjoy regardless of their political views. . . . The right to free speech should not only be left for those who have the resources to hire halls but for those who have to use the streets. . . . Such an area should not be a gesture to democracy but somewhere that the general public pass by and from which they will be able to hear and see those engaged in political activity on the streets.'

He ended by calling on WYMCC to create a Free Speech Area in Leeds city centre, having stressed that the only suitable areas were Lands Lane Precinct and Dortmund Square as they were regularly used by progressive and socialist groups and were focal points of the city and in the main shopping area.

Garvey's speech and the delegation gained considerable support from County Councillors and valuable assistance from Councillors Aleck Speck, Alex Wilson and Len Hodgson. Local radio interviews and press reports ensured that the campaign demands reached as wide an audience as possible.

LEEDS POLICE - BACK DOOR TACTICS

Having failed to drive FRFI and the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign off the streets by their usual methods of brute force and intimidation, Leeds police

LEEDS PRECINCT SIX

Let us talk to the people

Constant police harassment in Leeds has led to 10 arrests of FRFI supporters and anti-racist youth in Leeds precincts. The Precinct 6 Defence Campaign and supporters of FRFI are continuing the struggle for the right to organise and take part in political activity on the streets of Leeds. Alongside the ongoing campaign on the streets to defend democratic rights there, supporters are demanding the establishment of a Free Speech Area in Leeds City Centre.



have resorted to political manoeuvring. They have been promoting a Free Speech Area in Victoria Square in Leeds. Sgt Burton went to a meeting of the Licensing Committee of Leeds City Council on Friday 14 January at which he put forward police objections to a Free Speech Area in Lands Lane Precinct or Dortmund Square and pressed for a Free Speech Area in Victoria Square.

Anyone with a shred of honesty about them will know that this is merely one more means of trying to silence those who wish to put forward views with which the police disagree to other

members of the public. In terms of Free Speech, Victoria Square is about as much use as a field in the middle of the Yorkshire Dales. Victoria Square may have been a focal point of Leeds city centre a century ago but today the focal point is around the main shopping area. The number of people passing Victoria Square, especially at weekends, is very small.

RONALD ON THE RUN

The political campaign led by the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign has even got

Chief Constable Ronald Gregory on the defensive. He has taken the logical step from political policing in the Precinct to political interference in the policy making of the County Council. Only a few days after the Precinct 6 delegation gained support for a Free Speech area Gregory submitted a document to the Council's Police Committee entitled 'Policing the Precincts'. In it he paints a picture of the Precincts as full of:

'youths fighting, Hells Angels and Punk rockers assembling, crowds gathering and causing obstruction and individuals causing annoyance because of their offensive behaviour'.

His purpose is to scare the Council into believing that to create a Free Speech area in the Precinct would be like licensing sin in hell. Ronald Gregory is thus attempting to steal from the elected representatives the right to make political decisions as to the use of the Precinct.

The Precinct 6 Campaign has forced Gregory to try and justify the political policing of the Precincts.

'Occasionally disturbances have occurred when individuals with particular political views have been distributing leaflets or selling political newspapers. This activity is legitimate provided no disturbance or obstruction is caused.'

The only disturbance caused when the Precinct 6 Campaign or FRFI has been using the Precinct has been created by the uniformed thugs who police the Precinct under Gregory's political direction! He goes on to say:

'However such activity sometimes causes confrontation between parties holding opposing views.'

The 'party' which holds opposing views to the Precinct 6 and which goes in for vicious confrontation is the Leeds police. Gregory shows that the real target of the whole document is the fight for democratic rights waged by the Precinct 6 campaign and now drawing in support from councillors, by the fact that the *only* organisation named in the whole document is the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign. And theirs are the only arrests he refers to. In doing this Gregory is politically attempting to undermine the campaign for democratic rights in Leeds.

Leeds police have shown once again that they are determined by one means or another to censor political views which they do not like. Precinct 6 and FRFI supporters are equally determined to ensure that democratic rights, fought for and won by the working class are defended. The campaign to establish a *REAL* Free Speech Area goes on and we call on all democrats to support us in this work.

- Write to Chief Constable Ronald Gregory, West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police, Police HQ, Laburnum Road, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, protesting against the Leeds police attack on Free Speech.
- Write to Local and County Councillors expressing your support for a Free Speech Area in Lands Lane Precinct/Dortmund Square.
- Send messages of support and urgently needed donations to Precinct 6 Defence Campaign, Box 10, c/o LAP, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2.
- Use our petition to collect signatures. Petition sheets can be obtained from FRFI sellers or by writing to us at the above address.
- JOIN WITH US ON THE STREETS TO DEFEND DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS!

Alison Scott and Garvey Harris

COLIN ROACH

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On Friday 14 January Colin's family and friends took to the streets and mounted a picket on Stoke Newington police station; they understood that it is only by the oppressed taking to the streets that the truth will come out. The 100 protestors were met by a cordon of police in front of the station. They carried placards saying POLICE MURDER. NO COVER UP. Some of the youth sat down on the High Street to carry the protest forward. Behind the police station is the Section House, a major centre for Hackney CID. A squad of plain clothes police emerged and attacked the youth. In the fighting one policeman got a cut hand and another a broken nose. The police arrested 8 youth and fitted them up with threatening behaviour, offensive weapons and unlawful wounding charges. When 19-year-old Delroy Thompson appeared in Old Street Magistrates Court the next day his arm was in a sling from injuries sustained. The police adopted new tactics to perpetuate their cover up. As a result of the demonstration the police called a meeting of interested parties to explain their view. In fact all the police did at this meeting was issue a number of denials. An attempt to defuse the situation.



The demonstration left Mare Street heavily swamped by police. Throughout the youth chanted 'What Dem Do? Murda! What We Want - Justice! After the march police viciously attacked the youth, beating and arresting people. People were made to give fingerprints and have photos taken, were abused and taunted. Most were held overnight.

But the family, friends and youth did not let up. The next Monday 100 people were again picketing the police station with placards saying 'Police murder, no

cover up. We demand the truth! We demand a full enquiry into the death of Colin Roach!' and chants of 'What do we want - the truth! What have they done - Murder!' Again the police, this time in their hundreds and backed up by a helicopter overhead, attacked the picket. This time 17 people were arrested for demanding the truth.

That same Monday evening a public meeting showed the strength of feeling and support for the Roach family's demand for a public inquiry. 150 people crowded in and after introductory speeches from Councillor Twomey and a representative of the Hackney Black People's Association, speaker after

speaker rose from the floor to express their hatred of the racist police and the need to take to the streets. Paul Boateng offered practical support and money from the GLC.

A Sikh brother from the Newham 8 Defence Campaign best expressed what many had put in their own way when he said 'Let us not wait for any help from these committees. When my son was being killed in the police station, when he was being brutalised he knew it was because of racism. Colin Roach was all our son. We are under great obligation to our son to fight back. Nothing else will satisfy us. We want justice. And not in a racist court. Demonstrate, demonstrate and demonstrate again and build up nation-wide pressure. Build up a voice so powerful that it is heard in Africa and Asia where black people also suffer. Otherwise we are just talking. I don't like talking in meetings. It is time to act.'

The demonstration on 23 January was 1,000 strong as it came to the police station. It was led by the Bow youth, Colin's family and friends. The youth made the message very clear: 'Hackney Police - Murderers! Murderers, Murderers, Murderers!' As the youth came away from the rally again the police attacked. With 22 more arrested now 47 are on criminal charges.

Truth lies with the oppressed people fighting racism and imperialism.

Andy Goddard

STOP PRESS

Recent press coverage has merely added to the unanswered questions. On 28 January the *Evening Standard* suddenly published a front page interview with Keith Scully, the friend who drove Colin to the police station. In it Mr Scully declares his belief that Colin shot himself and says that Colin was acting in a strange manner saying that people were trying to kill him.

So that seems to 'solve' the mystery for the *Evening Standard* - Colin Roach was mentally disturbed and even one of his friends says he probably shot himself. But the huge question mark over this so-convenient story is this. Mr Scully says he made a statement to police the same night Colin shot himself. Presumably this statement is the same as that given to the *Evening Standard*. If so why have the police not used it? It is difficult to conceive of the police - faced with a near uprising over Colin's death - not publicising the fact that Colin's friend was backing up their claim of suicide. But now 16 days after the event - Mr Scully's statement is produced by a newspaper. All those who doubt the police story will want to know the answer to this question. Why was there a 16-day delay in publicising Mr Scully's statements? Why did the statement come out only when it became clear that local anger was not fading but growing?

COURT APPEARANCES:
all at 10am at
Old Street Magistrates Court
15 February, 23 February,
1 March
Messages of support
and for further information:
Roach Family Support
Committee,
c/o 50 Rectory Road,
London N16.

■ Fight to keep women's hospital

Wandsworth Health Authority's decision to close the South London Hospital for Women and Children has been met with fury. A demonstration against the closure resulted in the Health Authority's meetings being broken up amid fighting. One Administrator had his finger broken when he tried to stop the demonstration. But these bureaucrats went ahead and voted to close the hospital. To save a paltry £5m per year they will sacrifice the health of thousands.

Situated in Clapham, the hospital is essential for all those women who do not wish to be treated by male doctors: in particular Asian women who make up 60% of the total of patients. Furthermore the hospital offers services to women not available elsewhere such as a day care abortion unit and the early treatment of cervical cancer by laser.

There is very widespread local opposition to this attack on women's rights: on Saturday 22 January 2000 signatures opposing the closure were collected in Balham High Street alone. 27,000 signatures have so far been collected.

FRFI readers are urged to write to Sam Dougherty, Chairman, Wandsworth District Health Authority, First Floor, Grosvenor Wing, St Georges Rd London SW17 0QT.

For further information contact South London Women's Hospital Campaign, 9 Rosehill Road, London SW18.

Chris Fraser

■ Women in prison

The overwhelming majority of prisoners in British gaols are working class people — most of them are men. Officially very little attention is paid to the approx 1400 women prisoners currently held in gaol — but the assumption of most people is that women are treated more leniently than men. The statistics prove otherwise. In 1970 the Home Office indicated that it hoped to have 'few or no' women in prisons by the end of the decade. In reality by 1982 there had been 65% increase in the number of women incarcerated, mostly for trivial offences. Coming before the courts, men are punished for their 'crimes' whereas women are dealt with in terms of their deviation from the standard view of what is 'feminine'.

In 1980 women comprised 15% of those found guilty of indictable offences; and in the year 1981, 5% of the 163,504 total numbers received into prisons in England and Wales. Of these 8185 women, 30.2% were untried, 20.4% were unsentenced and only 47.8% were sentenced. Of the males received into custody 28.8% were untried; 14% unsentenced and 54.2% were sentenced. Female remands in custody (that is those incarcerated but not found guilty and sentenced) account for 22% of female receptions whereas the figure for male remands is 15.7%.

So proportionately more women than men are remanded in custody yet the offences committed are mainly trivial. In 1981 it was claimed that 32% of women in prison were done for theft under £5, and 28% for fine default. Other offences include those related to prostitution and fraud, both of which reflect specific views about women in our society. The DHSS assumes that women should be financially dependent on men, and many fraud prosecutions are the consequence of women (and men) challenging this view. In cases of prostitution women are prosecuted where their male clients are not.

If then these women are not dangerous, why are they more likely to be remanded in custody than men? The view of women offenders as 'unfeminine' assumes they are mentally ill, and encourages magistrates to remand them for psychiatric reports. Without being either convicted or sentenced, for imprisonable and non-imprisonable offences, people being brought before the courts can be reman-

ded for 3 weeks in custody, or for 4 weeks if on bail, for these reports to be conducted.

Remands for report are mostly custodial and the reports are compiled by the prison medical service, who usually have little or no knowledge of psychiatry. Even psychiatrists themselves are currently engaged in a battle about defining mental ill-health, treatments and the rights and wrongs of psychiatry and its uses. The prison medical service is an autonomous body, outside the NHS and the control of the area health authorities. It is answerable to the Home Office. Prison medical officers are prison officers first and medical staff second.

RAP (Radical Alternatives to Prison) argue that the view of women as mentally ill is used to justify the far higher amount of drugs used in women's prisons. In 1979 Holloway dispensed 186,542 doses of psychotropic drugs (which affect the central nervous system and can be addictive). Yet Brixton, a men's prison, dispensed 123,159. Brixton administers an average of one drug dose per man per day, and Holloway an average of three doses per woman per day.

In 1981 0.8% of men received into custody and 3.8% of women (nearly 5 times as many) were remanded for psychiatric reports. The outcome of these reports and their influence on sentencing is unknown as no research has been done in this area. *The Guardian* reported in December 1978 that 7.4% of men and 37.5% of women were in prison on their first offence. Women are thought to be more rehabilitable than men so short, sharp, shock treatments for them are considered more appropriate. Women are more likely to be remanded in custody than men. This is not because they are more dangerous. 74% of remanded women compared to 50% of remanded men do not get prison sentences later. The use of prison is not to protect the public from dangerous people but to threaten those who do not hold and live by the values necessary to maintain a capitalist society.

Jo Lewis

■ Imperialism murders 40,000 children every day

The real horror of the extent of imperialist exploitation in the oppressed nations received a few lines in a daily paper. Figures released by the United Nations Population Division pointed out that nearly 10¼ million babies died during 1982. Of this number 10 million were from oppressed nations, the rest were from imperialist nations. Another 5 million children up to the age of four died last year and these 'were even more predominantly in the developing countries'. This means that on average 40,000 children die every day of the year because of lack of food, medicine, shelter, as well as brutal exploitation. The criminal and violent nature of capitalism is exposed again. At a time when production should be increasing to meet the basic human needs the real criminals are destroying the factories, farms, equipment and food because in their eyes profits are more important than human lives.

Alan James

NOTES & COMMENTS

■ Welsh Republicans on trial

8 members or supporters of the Welsh Socialist Republican Movement face possible life sentences on charges under the Explosive Substances Act 1883 and the notorious Conspiracy laws in connection with bomb attacks which took place between 1980 and 1982. 5 of them: David Burns, Nic Hodges, Dafydd Ladd, Brian Rhys and Gareth Westacott have now been held in prison on remand since May 1982, whilst 3: Robert Griffiths, Jenny Smith and Adrian Stone are on bail, the conditions of which include sureties of £5,000 and for Jenny Smith and Adrian Stone, signing on at the police station twice weekly and surrendering their passports.

Committal proceedings for the 8 lasted 3 weeks from 15 November to 2 December during which time the stipendiary magistrate showed his sympathy for the prosecution and rejected out of hand any submission from the defence that various charges be dropped.

No date has yet been set for the full trial, although Easter time has been suggested. The Welsh Political Prisoners Defence Committee has held a number of pickets and meetings in defence of their imprisoned comrades and plan to hold a local demonstration. An indication of the support the prisoners have received is that between them they received 300 Christmas cards.

Messages of support, donations and requests for information should be sent to WPPDC, c/o Mature Students, Students Union, Park Place, Caerdydd, Wales.

Chris Fraser

■ McGahey sells out Kinneil

As it met in an Edinburgh hotel on 28 December 1982 a Scottish delegate meeting of the Miners' Union had to be protected by a strong police cordon from over 100 miners and their wives who had come to demand official support for their unofficial action in defence of jobs at Kinneil Colliery, West Lothian. 12 men had sat-in underground till Christmas Day to save the pit, and looked to this gathering to take up where they left off.

The response of Scottish Miners' President Mick McGahey the 'Communist' Party's foremost industrial militant was to 'admit defeat'. McGahey's contribution to the fight to save Kinneil was to test the water elsewhere and swim with the backward majority instead of joining the Kinneil campaign which was beginning to win the sympathy of ordinary workers. Instead McGahey and his executive recommended and won a 12 to 7 majority for a return to normal working throughout Scotland and acceptance of closure at Kinneil.

Kinneil Branch Secretary Simon Martin commented:

'I was thoroughly disgusted by the attitude of some of the delegates at the conference and most of all by the executive's recommendation. We were confident we were building our support. There was a lack of executive leadership. The men are disappointed and angry. There is a very, very deep feeling

that Mr McGahey and Mr Scargill have let us down.'

The Kinneil sell-out has confirmed that there is no prospect within the foreseeable future of this section of the working class movement pulling itself together in defence of its own interests, let alone of giving a lead to any fight back against the Tories.

Paul McKinlay

■ Edinburgh tenants campaign

In Edinburgh, activists from the Pilton Tenants Association faced trial on charges of 'Breach of the Peace' for fighting for decent housing. All eight accused were found guilty, two were given hefty fines of £100 and £50.

Their 'crime' was to mount an all-night protest outside the Council Chambers prior to a meeting of the Council the next day. Police alleged that the eight were part of a group who persisted in noisiness and rowdiness despite warnings to be quiet. The Tenants Association claim that their peaceful protest was broken up by police who behaved in a heavy-handed manner, attempting to arrest mothers and teenage children. The Sheriff apparently decided that guitar-playing is an act of serious rowdiness — no doubt the police action and the guilty verdicts are not unrelated to the City Fathers' wish to keep the centre of Edinburgh as decorous and free of political protest as they can during the tourist season. Ghetto slums like Pilton on the outskirts of town are never visited by the 'Festival fun and culture seekers' so the Tory Council are quite happy as long as the poor stay and rot down there.

Last year, Pilton activists were threatened with arrest if they carried out a plan to take a float of their own on the Festival Parade. The Pilton Campaign is an exposure of all the corrupt, profit-making ideals of the rulers of this city who spend a fortune of the working class' rates on subsidising 'culture' so that money can roll back into the pockets of businessmen, and who refuse to spend money on making old council property fit for people to be charged rent for.

However, the cracks are beginning to show in this facade of a 'fair city' — perhaps next year's Festival will see the streets not so easy to clear of the decent citizens of Pilton, Muirhouse, Niddrie, Wester Hailes. Thieves and robbers in business suits, blue uniforms and wigs and gowns — beware!

Gary Cameron

■ Greenham struggle continues

Since December's successful ringing of the base at Greenham Common, the women's struggle has continued unabated. Their direct-action tactics have included:

- On 1 January entering the 'high security' base at Greenham by the simple means of using ladders to climb over the fence! They then proceeded to further dent the pride of the military by dancing on the silos at the missile site.
- 17 January invading the House of Com-

mons sitting, chanting and singing in the Central Lobby and Public Gallery, to the consternation of many of the 'Right Hon' Ladies and Gentlemen there assembled.

These continued and determined protests have brought unwelcome attention to the British state's military plans and nuclear strategy. Frightened by the huge upsurge of anti-nuclear war feeling being generated, the government has begun its own pro-nuclear propaganda campaign on which millions will be spent peddling slick lies and anti-communist trash.

The Greenham women may stand peace candidates in the General Election — including standing against notorious Labour right-wingers like Healey. This strategy will horrify certain CND leaders who want to see the peace movement under Labour control. Foot & Co have rapidly jumped on the peace bandwagon to capture the massive peace vote. A challenge to Labour control of the peace movement will unnerve them all.

Meanwhile the British state has responded to the Greenham women's protests by arresting and detaining them. From the repressive catalogue of laws it uses to suppress democratic protest the state has charged the 44 women arrested on 1 January at Greenham under the 1361 Magistrates Act. A mere 600 years old, this Act allows the police and courts to impose a 'bind-over' and meant that the Greenham 44 were denied bail and held in police custody until they appeared in court.

Similarly the women protesters at the House of Commons were summarily arrested and interned for several hours in Westminster Hall.

The courage and spirit of the Greenham women continues to expose the anti-democratic and war mongering character of British imperialism.

Maxine Williams

■ Sheffield Peace Centre

In Sheffield, a group of peace campaigners have occupied the Mason's building and opened it as a Peace Centre. The council of so-called 'Peace City' have cut off the electricity while Sheffield CND are trying to remain neutral. Send messages of support to Sheffield Peace Centre, 94 Surrey Street, Sheffield and write to Councillor Roger Barton, Council Chambers, Town Hall, Sheffield, urging support for the Centre; also to Sheffield CND, c/o Jim Coleman, 126 Station Road, Woodhouse, Sheffield.

SUPPORT THE WATER WORKERS!

The water workers are on strike, demanding pay parity with workers in Gas and Electricity. As low paid workers, their basic pay is between £78 and £86 a week. The reactionary government, which tramples on the poor and oppressed at every opportunity, have cranked up the propaganda machine which is pouring out a torrent of propaganda against the strike, and how it will affect the poor and sick. The simple truth is that this government would rather have sewage flowing through the streets than allow working people like the water workers to get decent pay. FRFI calls on all its supporters to give their full backing to the water workers in their just struggle.

REVIEWS

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orders' movement 'directed against the appropriation of the soil (M&E p157). Therefore it threatened to destroy the landed aristocracy, destroy the alliance of the British ruling class and therefore open the road to the British revolution. Provided, of course, that the British workers made common cause with the Irish. This did not happen on a great enough scale and thus the British ruling class was able to 'achieve' (at the expense of the Irish people) the land question from above and avoid revolution. This Bell regards as 'disproving' Marx.

Today the alliance which sustains the British ruling class is its alliance with the corrupt and privileged leadership of the labour and trade union movement: the labour aristocracy. This parasitical layer exists only on the superprofit derived from imperialist oppression and exploitation. The Labour Party is the

political expression of this layer and is, therefore, thoroughly bourgeois imperialist and corrupt. The Irish struggle today being directed against British imperialism threatens to destroy this aristocracy also — thus opening up the road to the British revolution because the labour aristocracy, as Lenin pointed out, is the major social prop of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Again, however, this depends on British workers uniting with the Irish people against British imperialism and its agents in the working class. Bell rejects all this when he rejects Marx. His attitude to Marx is the same as... Remsey MacDonnell's attitude to Jim Larkin in 1982: 'It is a little provocative, but we must take no notice of it.'

Having 'buried' Marx, Bell tries to resurrect the Labour Party. The *Communist* 1982-21 is an example of this technique. He applauds the motion passed at the June 1920 conference which demanded 'free and absolute self-determination', the withdrawal of British troops and an all-Ireland constituent assembly to draw up a constitution. Very good... except that the Irish already had an all-Ireland constituent assembly (Dail Eireann) and a constitution (the Easter Proclamation 1916 and the Dail Democratic Programme 1919).

Irish people, led by the IRA, were fighting and dying to protect their constitution and their assembly. The real question was whether or not the Labour Party would recognise Dail Eireann and the Irish Republic. It did not. It refused. The purpose of the Labour Party's 'constituent assembly' was to avoid revolution and overturn the Republic. Listen to Labour Party chairman William Adamson:

'I am sure it is not beyond the wisdom of the government to devise ways and means for producing an atmosphere which will bring out the best in the Irish people and induce them to give expression of kinship with us.' (Bell p62)

Udud George did devise 'ways and means': it was called 'immediate and absolute terror' and produced partition. The Labour Party responded by welcoming 'The Irish Free State' — ie partition. In any case the 'unconditional support to Irish self-determination' (Bell p57) only lasted from June 1920 to December 1920 — six months out of eighty years; not very impressive!

The Labour Party continued along the same lines to today. Readers of FRFI hardly need reminding of the Government of Ireland Act 1949; introduction of troops 1969; Prevention of Terrorism Act 1974; establishment and implementation of non-jury courts, torture, the H-Blocks, SAS assassination squads, withdrawal of Special Category Status 1974-79. For recompense Bell offers Benn and the Labour Committee on Ireland. Benn sat through the last two Labour governments as a Cabinet Minister without uttering one word of protest. The Labour Committee on Ireland appeared after Labour lost the election and in order to persuade Irish workers into voting Labour again.

Mr Bell is up to the same trick but this book, thankfully, is so badly written, so sloppy and inaccurate (eg TOM was founded in late 1973 not 1976; the *Daily Mirror* first called for troop withdrawal in 1978, not 1979) that he has no chance of achieving his goal. Readers are recommended to read the *Communist Tradition on Ireland* (FRFI 7 to 24) for a real Marxist analysis of the Labour Party and Ireland.

Terry Marlowe

IMPERIALIST CUTTHROATS SHARPEN THEIR KNIVES

Imperialism's aggressive nature is showing itself in a massive military build up. The US imperialists are planning to spend the astronomical sum of \$1.65 trillion in the next five years on war preparations. All the major imperialist countries are increasing their military spending. This build up threatens fresh colonial ventures and a third world war. The British war against Argentina, the Zionist invasion of Lebanon, and the South African occupation of Angola are but a foretaste of the bloodletting imperialism has in store for the future.

The reason for the intensification of militarism is the deepening crisis of imperialism. In its worst economic crisis for half a century, the imperialist countries have to intensify their exploitation of the rest of the world. But the scope for further imperialist exploitation is restricted because of the consolidation of the socialist countries and the series of victories won by the national liberation movements during the 70s in Vietnam, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Iran and Nicaragua. To maintain its blood-sucking existence, imperialism now has to reverse the gains of oppressed and working people. This means crushing national liberation struggles and destroying socialism wherever it has gained a foothold.

The new military technology and strategy being deployed by the imperialists is fashioned to serve these ends.

- The deployment of MX, Trident, Cruise and Pershing-2 nuclear missiles giving the US the power to launch a successful first-strike against the socialist countries for the first time in three decades.
- New strategies for 'nuclear war-fighting' which envisage local nuclear war in Europe, extended nuclear war, and even the possibility of winning—according to US Vice-President George Bush, this means at least 5% of the US population surviving.
- The development of weapons for use in Space. The US Airforce is establishing a Space Command at Colorado Springs.
- The manufacture and deployment of barbaric chemical and biological weapons, such as binary nerve gases, and the neutron bomb.
- The creation of the 300,000 strong US Rapid Deployment Force for intervention in the Middle East and Gulf. Britain and France have formed similar units. Their task is to protect imperialism's sources of raw materials and energy from the people they belong to.
- The NATO decision last May that 'members of the alliance may be required to facilitate out-of-area deployments'—in other words to attack oppressed nations and national liberation movements.
- Japanese rearmament at the urging of the US imperialists. It now has the sixth largest military budget in the world, despite a constitution forbidding armed forces. This is to threaten Korea, China, the Soviet Union and to dominate South-East Asia.
- The militarisation of the Indian Ocean through a massive build up of US ships, bases and forces in East Africa, Oman, Pakistan and Diego Garcia.

Those who benefit from this rising tide of militarism are the capitalists who look on war with the same sense of regret as a vulture eyeing up a corpse. Every bullet and bomb spells more profit, as the *Financial Times* argues supporting

British participation in imperialist 'peace-keeping' plans:

'the presence of British troops in Lebanon and the accompanying publicity would alert UK companies to the possibilities that market would offer over the next few years. And with the Lebanese army about to embark on a large re-equipment programme who better to promote military sales than the men who impressed everyone with their skills and expertise in the Falklands?'

It is the poor and oppressed everywhere who will suffer from this militarism. Not only are their liberation struggles a major target of imperialist aggression, they are also the ones who pay for the military build up. In 1982 more than \$600bn was spent on the military worldwide—enough to wipe out the colossal debt of the oppressed nations. This staggering sum is six times the entire amount spent on health and education in the oppressed nations. If it wasn't wasted on arms, it could end starvation, destroy the worst infectious diseases, banish illiteracy and house everyone in the Third World before the end of this century. But so long as imperialism exists 1,500m people are condemned to starvation, misery and illiteracy—as well as the threat of war.

But it is not only the people in oppressed nations who suffer from militarism. The socialist countries are forced to waste colossal resources to defend themselves against the imperialist

threat. Inside the imperialist countries, welfare programmes are slashed as military budgets climb. For, as US Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger says 'If we go to war, it won't be fought with social services'. As the arms pile up, so does the burden of poverty and misery forced on working people.

In their desperation, the imperialists are even gambling with their own future. In the first place, the arms spending deepens the capitalist economic and financial crisis. The US government is facing a \$200bn budget deficit because of its war spending. Financing this deficit can only aggravate the crisis of the imperialist banking system. Secondly, the imperialists will not draw back from using their armouries to resolve their own differences over trade and finance as was clearly demonstrated during the last two world wars.

While it is the oppressed people of the Third World who are spearheading the struggle against imperialism, they are not alone. The socialist countries

who lost tens of millions of their citizens through imperialist aggression, have proposed measure after measure to halt and reverse the imperialist military build up. But all their attempts to find a compromise have been rejected by the imperialists. The threat of nuclear war has impelled millions in the imperialist countries to protest. If this peace movement is to succeed it will, like the oppressed, have to confront imperialism. And the imperialists are doing everything they can to divert the disarmament movement. Government propaganda tries to blame the socialist countries and accuses them of instigating oppressed people's just struggles for national liberation. It is mounting a propaganda campaign against peace and those who campaign for it. It is brazen hypocrisy for warmongers to jail protesters at Greenham Common for 'behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace'!

Steven Palmer



palestine

While the US imperialists chaperone talks between their Israeli and Lebanese government clients, and an advanced detachment of British troops joins the US, French and Italian forces stationed in Beirut, Palestinian freedom fighters, assisted by their progressive Lebanese allies, have begun to hit back hard against the Zionist enemy.

Palestinian units have regrouped after the battles in Lebanon and Beirut to wage classical guerilla warfare within Zionist occupied Lebanon, the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and inside the Israeli borders themselves. Daily ambushes are taking a growing toll of Israeli troops. A *Sunday Times* reporter described the effect of these attacks on the manoeuvrability of the occupying forces:

'A journey through Lebanon with the

Israelis these days is more tense than at any time since the war. Everyone is issued with flak jackets. There have to be two soldiers in each car, their guns at the ready, sticking through the windows. The cars must go in convoy and cannot move at night.'

The justice and fierceness of the Palestinian resistance to the Zionist invaders has clearly demoralised many Israeli soldiers, despite their massive supplies

of imperialist donated weaponry and constant conditioning with racist propaganda against Arab peoples. Israeli medical officials report that for every 100 physical casualties suffered by their forces there are 23 psychiatric casualties. Many have been shocked into trauma by the barbarism that Zionism and imperialism commanded of them. Teams of psychologists and sociologists have been organised by the Israeli state to work alongside its troops in an attempt to maintain battle morale. One casualty saw the reality of the counter-revolutionary war against the Palestinian people and was filled with disgust: 'This gun does awful things to people, so I will never touch this garbage.' Imperialism and Zionism have been confident that they had delivered the Palestinian people and their only legitimate representative the Palestinian Liberation Organisation a fatal blow. Their smiles of satisfaction at the destruction of Palestinian strongholds and diplomatic celebrations at their occupations of Lebanon are increasingly threatened by the rekindling resistance of the Palestinian fighters. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat vowed that their armed struggle would continue and that 'the volcano that erupted in Beirut will continue its tremors until it reaches Jerusalem.'

Trevor Rayne

● Repression in the Philippines

Eighty priests on the Philippine island Samar have been refusing to carry out their duties in protest at military repression. On 1 September 1982, soldiers raided a church-run Social Action Centre in Catbalogan and arrested a nun and lay workers. Fr Edgardo Kangleon was arrested later and warrants are out for further 14 priests, two nuns and several lay workers.

This attack on radical clergy is just part of the vicious repression by the puppet Marcos regime against the oppressed and their sympathisers. Samar is a stronghold of the New People's Army, the military wing of the Philippines Communist Party, which operates on fronts comprising 12 million people—quarter of the whole population.

● Peru—path to revolution

The workers and peasants of Peru responding to the imperialist crisis are joining their Central American brothers and sisters on the path to revolution. Daily service payments to the imperialist banks on Peru's \$11.5 billion foreign debt account for 79% of export earnings. The people are without full employment and those with jobs must work twice as many hours to earn the goods they could buy a decade ago.

From their base among the Andean Indians, a people trampled upon and forgotten by history, the Sendero Luminoso are leading the resistance. Among '658 armed incidents' reported last year were the emptying of towns and villages of government troops, and the capture of armoured cars in the Ayacucho department. In September the workers and oppressed attacked symbolic and strategic targets in Lima the capital including the British ambassador's residence. The British army train Peru government officers.

The Peruvian state has responded by drafting troops, helicopter gunships and reconnaissance aircraft into Ayacucho. The press report rumours of the possible use of napalm as happened in the 1960s. Yet the Senderos will not be deflected.

Their recent call for a strike against poverty and repression was a complete success. They continue to press on with the armed struggle, and, upon the recent birthday of their founder they celebrated with true revolutionary flair blacking out Lima and igniting giant bonfires on the hills above that blazed out a birthday greeting and the symbol of worker and peasant unity and the path to power, the hammer and sickle.

TR

● Kenyan 'stability'

There has been no respite for Kenya's progressive masses since the bloody suppression of the 1 August 1982 coup when over 2,000 workers, peasants and students were murdered by President Moi's government. Since the coup the Moi government has moved fast to try and suppress all democratic and revolutionary opposition to Kenya's pro-imperialist dependent ruling class. The Air Force whose officers led the coup, has been disbanded and 800 Air Force men court-martialled with at least 5 sentenced to death. Former Vice President Oginga Odinga has been arrested as has radical MP George Anyona. Particularly harsh treatment has been reserved for progressive students in Kenya, 69 of whom came up for trial in early January. Of these only 1 have defence lawyers as Kenyan lawyers are wary of representing oppositionists for fear of arrest and detention. Last year John Khaminwa, representing Oginga Odinga and George Anyona, was detained for his efforts. The fate of these students can be judged from the experience of Oginga Odingo who was given 6 years for sedition on 7 October 1982. The Kenyan Attorney General appealed against the sentence on the grounds that the student had shown no remorse. Oginga Odingo got four more years added to his sentence. Meanwhile the government has dissolved Nairobi University which contained a strong nucleus of revolutionary students and lecturers. It is by such means that 'democratic' Kenya hopes to preserve 'stability' and reassure the imperialist investors and banks.

EA

technicians of torture

THE MEDICAL TREATMENT OF PRISONERS

It is one of the worst outrages of the British prison system that doctors should abuse their training and power to refine, orchestrate and oversee the torture and interrogation of detainees. Very far from being carers for the sick and preservers of health, they are integral members of the repressive régime. In the words of Doug Wakefield, author of *A thousand days of solitary*, 'They are simply an extension of Home Office authorities'. The British prison system and its doctor-collaborators are in clear contravention of the United Nations rules on medical care of detainees. Apart from direct involvement in interrogation and torture, these doctors constantly refuse treatment to or ill-treat prisoners, whose detention frequently causes ill-health and severe depression. Interrogated and beaten by police, incarcerated in prison, prisoners soon learn to know and fear the 'medical officer' who stands over them in the detention cell. Doctors have been used throughout the world in this way; and as always in such matters, Britain is a pioneer and teacher for repressive regimes the world over.

In 1955 the United Nations adopted precisely worded 'Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners'. Of course the UN has no power of enforcement in this or any other matter. Nevertheless the rules set out the *minimum* provision of medical services to be guaranteed to prisoners and the doctor's responsibilities. These are flouted and abused throughout the imperialist-dominated world, and notably by Britain itself. Extracts from the rules include the following demands: the medical services to be 'in close relationship to the general health administration of the community or nation'; the transferring of sick prisoners to specialist centres for treatment, and *outside* the

prison service if such specialist treatment or staff is not available within; access to specialist medical care for women; 'the discovery of physical or mental illness and the taking of *all necessary measures*'; a daily visit to all sick prisoners, all who complain of illness, and that the medical officer *must intervene* if illness should incapacitate a prisoner for prison work and if 'a prisoner's physical or mental health has been or will be injuriously affected by continued imprisonment or by any condition of imprisonment'; that the medical officer strictly monitor 'quantity, quality, preparation and service of food', 'the hygiene and cleanliness of the institution', sanitation, lighting,

ventilation and access to physical education and sports.

In other words the medical officer is a powerful individual whose 'job description' is outlined and defined by rules of the United Nations as the preservation of the health and the basic democratic rights of prisoners and detainees. Let us be very clear therefore that the prison medical service has contravened the UN resolution as well as the professional codes of conduct applying to all doctors.

The prison system stands accused of torturing the Price sisters, Hugh Feeney, Gerry Kelly (Irish POWs), Des Warren, Doug Wakefield, Steve Thompson; of murdering Michael Gaughan, Frank Stagg, Noel Jenkinson, Sean O'Connell, Giuseppe Conlon, Tim Noonan, Barry Prosser, Richard Campbell, George Wilkinson. At the inquests into these deaths and numerous other deaths in detention the course of justice has been clearly perverted. What role does the prison doctor play in this process? What responsibility does the prison doctor have for these travesties? What role does the prison medical service play in the denial of democratic rights and health care to prisoners? What part have these doctors played in the system which hands out beatings and assaults on prisoners daily throughout British prisons?

In some cases the truth is known at least in part, and a few of these are outlined in this article. In countless others the truth will never be known, covered up by the inquest verdict - 'suicide', death from 'natural causes', 'self-neglect' (Campbell) - or the prisoner silenced by zombifying drugs, sectioned and hidden away in prison 'hospitals'.

CURRENT PRACTICE

The British prison regime is a machine of repression. The doctors in its employ are collaborators with the regime; their function is not remotely connected to the responsibilities outlined in the UN rules. A prisoner cannot see a doctor on request. Access to a prison doctor is often used as blackmail - available only if the prisoner conforms. To see a doctor of his/her choice there is a deliberately tortuous procedure through the Home Office which can take months or years. Every obstruction is erected to prevent sick prisoners receiving treatment, even to the point where one prisoner had to have his leg amputated following neglect of his ingrowing toenail. In all other aspects of the UN minimum rules, the cases outlined below show clearly how they are contravened.

OVERSEEING TORTURE

The oldest medical code of ethics, the Hippocratic Oath, used to be sworn by every doctor and it bound the doctor always to act in the interests of the patient: to 'abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous. (To) give no deadly medicine to any one if asked, nor suggest such counsel... Whatever I see or hear... I will not divulge... all such should be kept secret'. More recently newer codes of ethics have been agreed which are even clearer in their directive to doctors never to involve themselves in torture or mistreatment of detainees. The Tokyo Declaration 1975 stated the following:

'Doctors shall not countenance, con-

done or participate in the practice of torture or other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading procedures, whatever the offence of which the victim of such procedure is suspected... in all situations including armed conflict in civil strife.' (World Medical Association Conference).

In imperialist Britain, these ethical codes count for nothing. One man who would have taken the Hippocratic Oath was Alexander Kennedy, Professor of Psychiatry to his death in 1960. During the Second World War, by his own admission, he used his expertise to instruct interrogators on how to break prisoners-of-war in Cairo. In so doing he became a technician of torture, a tradition continued and refined ever since.

The existence of a special training centre in Sussex became known in the early sixties. Here, doctors had been training British interrogators in the techniques of psychological torture. Information about its existence has always been protected by the D-notice system of politically motivated censorship. However, it was operating in 1973 and undoubtedly exists today in yet more 'sophisticated' form. In 1971 the torture techniques incorporating sensory deprivation which Britain had used in Cyprus, Aden and other colonial wars, were used on internees in the occupied Six Counties of the north of Ireland. Doctors' expert training had prepared the way for this operation in terror directed against the nationalist community. This torture became notorious as the 'Five Techniques': hooding, high-pitched noise, leaning against a wall outstretched on the finger tips for long periods, sleep deprivation, dietary deprivation - sensory deprivation well-researched and designed to break a prisoner without leaving a single mark to betray the torture. From then until the present day, doctors have been directly involved in the torture and murder of Irish political prisoners.

'Don't puke and you won't choke'

Irish Political Prisoners

HUNGER STRIKE 1973/4

On 15 November 1973, four Irish prisoners in England began a hunger strike which was to last 205 days. The four were Hugh Feeney, Gerry Kelly, and the Price sisters, Marian and Dolours. They demanded repatriation to Ireland. They were brutally forcefed for 167 days. The daily agony was supervised by a doctor. They were blindfolded and their noses were closed over. The doctor used a steel clamp to forcibly separate their teeth, first gripping their gums with sharp instruments to force open a gap. A wooden gag was inserted and a thick tube pushed into the stomach down through the mouth and throat. Soon their mouths and throats were torn right down to the flesh. Held in a chair and bound, they would have liquid poured down the tube into the stomach, distending it rapidly. This induced a powerful reflex urge to vomit, which was thwarted by the doctor's hand placed over the end of the tube. The panic and the fear of choking was indescribable. And the doctor's advice to Marian was 'Yes, quite, don't puke and you won't choke'. 'The

doctors say they do it because of their oath to save life', wrote Hugh Feeney to his father. 'I disagree as I believe it is done to save Robert Carr [then Home Secretary] from making a simple decision.' Soon the Home Office were forced to make that decision, but not before they had murdered an Irish POW.

MURDER

Five Irish political prisoners have been murdered in English prisons since 1974.

- Michael Gaughan died following forcefeeding in Parkhurst on 3 June 1974. Forcefeeding is always supervised by a doctor. The tube had been pushed through his red-raw gullet into the lung. His death led Brixton doctors to refuse to continue forcefeeding the Price sisters, perhaps fearful of being accused of murder.

DES WARREN

Des Warren was one of six trade unionists jailed at Shrewsbury in 1973 in a show political trial. He was a political prisoner imprisoned for his leading role in organising pickets in the North Wales area during the 1972 building workers strike. The charges were conspiracy to intimidate building workers to abstain from work, unlawful assembly and making an affray. He spent over 820 days in prison including eight months solitary confinement, four and a half months of which he was wearing only a towel, refusing to wear prison uniform. He was reported 36 times for 'breaches of discipline' and was moved 15 times between 10 different prisons - typical treatment given to political prisoners. So too was the medical 'treatment' he received. Atrocious conditions in Shrewsbury led to him having scurvy and an ear infection. (The key to my cell, by Des Warren 1982.) The doctor said scurvy was only to be expected in such conditions. The ear infection was neglected and the ear drum burst some time later with Des in agony.

With his imprisonment and harassment, enormous pressure built up on Des, leading to his seeking advice and support for his own single cell from the prison doctor, specially sent to Leicester from Gartree. He was given no such support. In its place he was prescribed the 'liquid cosh' - the name given to the various cocktails of drugs used to zombify prisoners. He was not told what he had been given, but it consisted of one drug to zombify and another supposedly to counteract the

The Home Office had to agree to repatriate the four prisoners in the wake of Gaughan's murder.

- Frank Stagg died on hunger strike on 12 February 1976. He was murdered by the prison system because he demanded to be recognised as a political prisoner and to serve his sentence in the Six Counties of the north of Ireland.
- Noel Jenkinson died in Leicester on 9 October 1976. The Coroner refused to allow Noel's friends to arrange an independent autopsy for 'security' reasons. Pathologist Dr Pugh pronounced the cause of death to be 'heart attack', without completing the standard autopsy procedure for unexplained death such as the analysis of the stomach contents.
- Sean O'Connell was the fourth. Sean died of untreated cancer in October 1977 (see inset).
- Giuseppe Conlon died on 23 January 1980. His killing took the form of calculated neglect over five years of imprisonment of a man with chronic TB and severe lung disease. Not only

SEAN O'CONNAILL

Sean O'Connell was a Republican POW imprisoned for life on 27 April 1974. He became the fourth Irish POW to die in English jails since 1974. He died of cancer on 1 October 1977 but had been as surely murdered by the prison regime as Michael Gaughan (see above). Sean first became ill eighteen months before his death, while in Hull prison. He developed serious chest pain. The doctor gave him tablets for heartburn. Moved to Gartree in Summer 1976, he was getting worse with severe chest and stomach pain, and was now coughing blood.

The diagnosis was cramp or heartburn. Sean was once again given indigestion tablets and a cream to rub on his chest. Other Irish POWs in Gartree however point out that the prison authorities must have known Sean to be seriously ill, because they sanctioned a truly exceptional measure for a British prisoner - a choice of hot food served from a hot plate.

Sean made several efforts to be allowed to contact a solicitor about his steadily deteriorating health and the treatment he had received. Finally he succeeded by smuggling out a letter. Alastair Logan visited him in September 1977 at Albany (he had been moved in July). Clearly he had been moved to Albany, one of the larger and more remote prison hospitals, because the prison regime had been warned that Sean was soon to die.

His treatment was Distalgic (a little stronger than aspirin) and the chest rub. Seen at last by an outside consultant on 31 August 1977, who arranged for a biopsy of part of the spreading tumour, the news for Sean was that he only had months to live: within two weeks he was dead. On the day before his death he was suddenly released 'on licence' to an outside hospital, Moor Green in Southampton. This meant Sean would not be a death in detention - the doctors, the prison and the Home Office would avoid the compulsory inquest.



The Prisoners Aid Committee (working on behalf of Irish POWs) arranged an independent post-mortem by an ex-Home Office pathologist. He was met with total obstruction. The Home Office pathologist refused him access to the prison medical notes and even to the organs of Sean's body, which he had removed. The independent report nevertheless pointed to gross neglect in the way Sean had been dealt with. The report stated that with the type of cancer involved '... it is frequently possible to diagnose the shadow it produces in an X-ray film early in its development'. It added that Sean's symptoms had clearly pointed to the diagnosis and the need for X-ray confirmation. 'Appropriate surgery in the early stages of the illness might have proved curative.' Finally, it pointed to the withholding of even palliative treatment such as radiotherapy or anti-cancer drugs which might have given Sean months or even years of life.

One of two conclusions can be drawn from this report. Either Sean O'Connell had been murdered by deliberate neglect - his illness was diagnosed and they did nothing, or those responsible for his treatment were utterly incompetent - they failed to diagnose his illness. Either way it is a major indictment of the prison medical service, and there is no doubt that Sean O'Connell was murdered by the prison system.

did various prison doctors fail in their duty to secure Conlon's release on health grounds, they contributed directly to his death in the most vicious way. They interfered with his dietary supplements, vital to support the little strength he had; they stopped his drugs taken to assist his constant struggle for air, and they acquiesced in such vindictive acts as his being put to work in the Wakefield prison paint shop, where the vapour took his breath away. In his final days Conlon was rushed back and forth from Wormwood Scrubs to Hammersmith Hospital before he died at last in Hammersmith. He had been murdered by neglect. The inquest gave the very different and now notorious verdict for a death in prison - 'natural causes'. The crucial testimony came from the doctors.

had occurred because of the state of the prison cells - the drug was fed to the POWs with no regard to individuals' allergies.

Regularly doctors sanctioned the use of punishment diet as a standard form of punishment; four rounds of dry bread, two mugs of black sugarless tea and one bowl of watery soup per day. It was known as 'Number One Diet' and was a sick betrayal of their responsibility strictly to monitor 'quantity, quality, preparation and service of food'. Likewise they allowed the despicable conditions in the H-Blocks to exist throughout the protest period. One prisoner got frostbite in the winter of 1977 - the heating was turned off in the bitter cold as a punishment, only to be turned full-on in the heat of summer. Maggots infested the cells, hepatitis, skin and eye infections, and diarrhoea struck the POWs. These conditions were another vicious form of torture added to the continuous beatings meted out from 1976 to 1981. The medical officers were an important part of that system.

'I will give no deadly medicine ...'

Other prisoners in Britain

Mind-controlling, or 'psychotropic', drugs are used throughout the prison system, not just in prison 'hospitals' like Rampton. One of the commonest, Largactil, (see inset) has been used illegally against countless prisoners. Under threat of being sectioned, and becoming a prisoner totally without rights (under mental health legislation) nor rights of appeal, many are blackmailed to accept drugs forced on them to break their spirit and control them. Michael Blake, a black prisoner in Gartree, was so badly drugged that the other prisoners rioted on 5 October 1978 in order to protest and so they saved him. Steve Thompson, another black prisoner and a Rasta, was given his second prison term in 1976. He was ordered to cut his locks and he refused. So he was drugged unconscious while screws cut his locks. Later, doctors used their powers under the Mental Health Act to send him to Rampton mental hospital, in August 1979. There he was further drugged so he could hardly speak. Only a lengthy defence campaign secured his release. Tim Noonan never recovered from the treatment he received. He died in 1974, eight weeks after release from Wandsworth. He had suffered more than 1,000 days in solitary confinement, over eight years of hell. His treatment led to a series of heart attacks which eventually killed him. The first was in Leicester Prison. He lay in agony for three days, and was prescribed 'aspirin water' by the prison doctor. Once again only a demonstration by fellow prisoners saved his life. But by this time prison had fatally affected his health, with the doctor playing a major role.

There is an ever-lengthening list of deaths in prisons (see *Frightened For My Life* by Coggan and Walker, Fontana) and the doctors are seldom far away. 696 prisoners died between 1969 and 1980. 258 (37%) were certified as unnatural causes or suicide. This percentage is rising dramatically - in 1980 it had reached 50% or 33 out of 65

deaths. The rest are 'natural causes'. Prison is a murder machine; doctors as part of the prison system are a component in this machine.

'Don't mark their faces'

COVER-UP

The murders of Basil Brown, Michael Morris, Percy Campbell, Sean O'Connell, Noel Jenkinson, Guiseppe Conlon were all neatly classified as 'natural causes'. The murders of Liddle Towers, James Kelly, Henry Floyd, Richard Campbell, Barry Prosser (see inset), Matthew O'Hara, Winston Rose, Paul Worrell... Time and again the prison doctor or Home Office pathologist gets up in court and his evidence is used to protect the murderer. British imperialism demands that its hirelings be loyal to imperialist principles and none other. And doctors in the prison service are expected to play their loyal part.

The most notorious cover-up in recent years was in the wake of the MUFTI squad attack on over a hundred peacefully protesting prisoners in D-Wing, Wormwood Scrubs in August 1979. 350 screws were involved in the assault, wearing thick padded overalls, helmets with visors and padded gloves, and carrying four foot long wooden staves and riot shields. As a result 69 prisoners required stitches for wounds, one man needed 22 stitches in his head, another 15, another suffered a broken collarbone and one nearly lost an eye. In the Home Office report published almost three years later, itself a total whitewash, it is made clear that prison officials including the principal medical officer of the Scrubs were involved in feeding lies to the press, the Board of Visitors and the outside world after the riot in an attempt to keep the lid on the news of this brutal assault on defenceless prisoners.

In the rare event of a doctor's conscience forcing him to expose what goes on in British prisons he is publicly vilified and abused. Two examples show the venom levelled against those who would go against this system. They expose the enormity of the guilt of some 200 full- and part-time prison doctors in the British medical service. Following the 1974 Birmingham bombings, the police framed six uninvolved Irishmen. In order to get confessions, they gave out savage beatings. The convictions rested on these confessions and the medical evidence was crucial. Dr Harwood had been the prison doctor at Winson Green. He stated in court that the prisoners had arrived at the jail to be handed over by the police 'black, blue, battered and bleeding'. Judge Bridge attacked him saying he was either incompetent, lacking in intelligence or else a plain and simple perjurer. The six were all sentenced to life.

The tactics were similar to those used to discredit the evidence of Dr Irwin against RUC torture under Kenneth Newman in the Six Counties. This RUC medical officer examined hundreds of Castlereagh interrogation victims at Townley Rd Barracks on their way to remand. (See FRFI 20 for an account of the terror regime in Castlereagh.) A staunch admirer of the RUC, Dr Irwin was one of the few police and prison doctors who refused to use their posi-

BARRY PROSSER

Barry Prosser was brutally beaten to death in Winson Green on the night of 18 August 1980. His killers - prison screws - so savagely attacked him that the autopsy revealed him to be covered with bruises from head to foot, his stomach had been ruptured, torn from the base of his oesophagus (gullet). He had bruised eyes, genitals and anus as well. Prosser had for years suffered from depression and had committed a minor offence in 1975, after a bout of drinking, which resulted in the court putting him under medical treatment, compulsorily under section 80 of the Mental Health Act. In 1979 he was again depressed and became quite ill. This worsened until a crisis was reached on 1 August 1980. The police arrested Prosser promising him and his wife they would seek medical help. In fact, his detention was motivated in court around the 'criminal damage' he had caused to a door handle. Detained to await the completion of a section 60, this mentally sick man was remanded not to a hospital but to Winson Green. He was put in G Wing in



a nine by fourteen cell with two other men. He began a long wait for the required medical assessment by two doctors. In these conditions he steadily deteriorated. A few days later, (we will never know what 'treatment' the screws gave Prosser) the prison doctor, Washbrook had authorised his removal to a strip cell in the prison hospital and the administration of Largactil. His family urgently began campaigning for his release and applied to the court for him to be allowed home, to have voluntary medical treatment. The magistrate turned down the application on 15 August 1980. Prosser was clearly a sick man, yet he was once again returned to the mercy of the screws. Three days later he was dead. According to Coggan and Walker in *Frightened For My Life*, one of the prison doctors was called to see Prosser. He looked shocked and was repeatedly saying 'water, water'. The doctor, having observed him through the cell window, prescribed Largactil by injection. Prosser had a real phobia of injections, a fact which was known to the screws who were to administer it. And the drug, now prescribed on the basis of a glance through a window, had just previously been withdrawn by Washbrook. Whatever happened next resulted in the brutal killing of Prosser, another victim of the prison machine and of the abuse of the Mental Health powers. The three prison screws charged with his murder eventually got off scot free: no-one was found guilty of his murder thanks to a conspiracy of silence and the evidence of an 'independent' pathologist, who stated under oath that it would have been possible for Prosser to have inflicted on himself those appalling injuries.

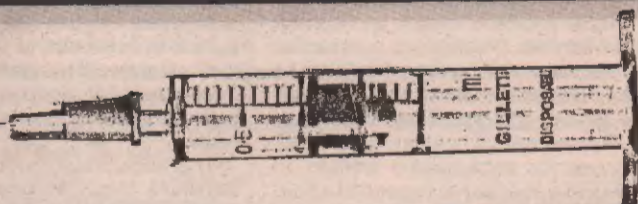
tion to cover up for torture and to perjure themselves in court. For two long years he had complained via internal RUC channels about the victims of torture he had examined: in his opinion 150-160 cases over a three year period. He met of course with a brick wall. Doctors were supposed to be a vital part of the conveyor-belt system of arrest-torture-remand-Diplock Court conviction-incarceration in H-Block/Armagh. He finally publicised the truth on London Weekend Television on 11 March 1979. The very next day he was subjected to a smear campaign in the British press that his allegations were prompted by a grudge he bore against the RUC: the RUC had failed to catch the British Army rapist who attacked Irwin's wife in 1976. Although Irwin and his colleague Elliot had succeeded in publicising the systematic torture regime of Newman, both resigned their posts under great personal pressure.

The cases of Harwood, Irwin and Elliot only highlight just how many crimes against detainees go unpublicised. The despicable record of involvement in torture of the prison and police

medical officers is summed up by what happened in the Hull Prison Riot, 1976. The prisoners had ended their occupation of 3 wings after 4 days protest against years of prison brutality and deteriorating conditions. The prison screws exacted vicious revenge, forcing prisoners to run the gauntlet, savagely beating them up. Irish POW Paul Hill described the role of the medical officers in this planned mass assault: 'At Hull the MOs ran alongside the screws yelling "Don't mark their faces"'.

Any campaign in defence of the rights of prisoners must condemn the prison medical service. We must demand the banning of doctors implicated in torture and ill-treatment and the bringing to trial of doctors guilty of crimes against prisoners. We must support the demand to abolish the prison medical service and to replace it by full access to the medical care of the prisoner's choice. We must call on workers in the health service to take up the issue of prisoners' rights to good health care as part of the battle on the outside in the defence of the prisoners of British imperialism.

Tony Sheridan



THE LIQUID COSH

Many powerful drugs affecting the nervous system are used in prisons, prescribed by 'doctors' - often five or six drugs in combination - to 'control' prisoners whom the prison machine wish to break: the liquid cosh is a mental strait jacket, a zombifying attack on defiant prisoners, often the political or politicised prisoners, frequently Irish or black.

Largactil is one of the most commonly used drugs. Chlorpromazine is the chemical name. Its entry in pharmaceutical listings is notable for its massive catalogue of serious as well as minor side effects. It has marked effects on the brain which could be summarised as an altering and blurring of numerous brain functions and responses. It modifies states of tension, inducing apathy, causes a slowing down effect and drowsiness, alters behaviour by reducing levels of response and a person's drive; it induces sleep and also markedly increases the effect of other tranquillisers such as Valium which may be given.

The wide-ranging effect on the brain may be gauged from some of its other actions - reducing body temperature, stopping the hiccup response, reducing nausea. Side effects include a drug-induced form of Parkinson's Disease (stiff uncontrolled muscles), interference with heart and liver function (jaundice), skin rashes and sensitivity to sunlight, severe depression of blood production, eye changes, drowsiness, dry mouth, nasal stuffiness. It may also cause sleeplessness and agitation (symptoms it is often used to suppress), sudden drop in blood pressure, painful injection sites and unstable body temperature, usually low but sometimes even high. It is given as tablets and liquid orally, and injections into muscle or direct into the blood.

References:
The Irish Prisoner, Journal of the Prisoners Aid Committee
Frightened For My Life, Coggan and Walker of PROP, the prisoners rights organisation (Fontana paperbacks)
The key to my cell, Des Warren (New Park)

On the Eve of 1917 – 'Reminiscences from the Revolutionary Underground'.
Published by Allison & Busby. £4.95

Alexander Shlyapnikov will be a name unfamiliar to the vast majority of readers of FRFI and yet as a communist and working class revolutionary he set a standard and example few have achieved. He played a leading role in the development of the Bolshevik Party (Russian Communist Party) before 1917, and in writing his memoirs has given a great service to communists today. The lessons of organisation, personal dedication and political struggle against the opportunists are as relevant now as when they were first written. This English translation, commendable for its clarity, was done by Dick Chappell.

The period covered is from 1914 to 1917, from just before the outbreak of the first imperialist world war to the eve of the revolutionary overthrow of the Tsar and the seizure of state power by the Bolsheviks. Included in his memoirs are the personal hardships Shlyapnikov had to endure in his commitment to the struggle, and the day to day organising of a revolutionary party faced with continual threat from the secret police.

ALLISON & BUSBY

Alexander Shlyapnikov
ON THE EVE OF 1917
Reminiscences from the Revolutionary Underground

Shlyapnikov was the main Bolshevik organiser in charge of liaising between the leadership outside Russia, Lenin and Zinoviev, and the organisation inside Russia, the procuring of funds for the Bolsheviks, and the smuggling of Bolshevik propaganda printed in Europe into Russia itself. In the course of this work Shlyapnikov left Russia and stayed and worked in many different countries including England and America. His centre of work in Europe was Sweden where he set up, with the help of exiled Bolsheviks and Swedish supporters, a smuggling route for propaganda into Russia. In this work Shlyapnikov also co-operated with supporters of the Mensheviks. His sole concern whilst in Europe was the practical step needed to further the progress of the revolutionary movement in Russia. He faced great personal danger since at this time Europe was at the beginning of the first world war and the Bolshevik groups in exile were being spied on and infiltrated by agents from all the competing imperialist powers.

Before the outbreak of the first world war Shlyapnikov had returned from Europe where he had been since the revolutionary events in Russia of 1900-1907, to work in St Petersburg (now Leningrad), a leading industrial city of Tsarist Russia. He was forced to disguise himself as a Frenchman to escape the attentions of the secret police. The political level of the working class was extremely high with political discussions taking place inside and outside the factories and workplaces. This was coupled however with a low level of trade union activity and organisation which reflected the early stage of development of the Russian working class. The working class in Russia had only begun to develop rapidly in the 1900's and there was no tradition of trade union organisation.

The working class was particularly militant in St Petersburg with a high level of political awareness. In the workshops there were often collections for solidarity causes, people in prison, exiles, and convict labourers and their families. Propaganda was carried out in the factories, discussion groups formed, and legal meetings concerned with the workers' insurance funds skillfully integrated into the revolutionary struggle. A novel way of holding illegal meetings in factories was for revolutionary workers to form a human 'plug' in a doorway at the end of a shift or dinner break, and an agitator would get up and start speaking. By the time the police arrived the meeting was finished.

In July of 1914 general walkouts started in the factories of St Petersburg protesting against police assaults on the workers. The action was led by groups of Bolshevik workers and Bolshevik speakers urging the workers to take up armed struggle and overthrow the Tsar. The demonstrations were met by attacks from the police and Cossacks but by 12 July 300,000 workers were on strike. Workers sought arms to defend themselves and barricades were erected in many working class districts. Mass arrests started everywhere and a large number of Bolshevik party workers were arrested. The demonstrations by the St Petersburg workers ended on 12 July but a large proportion of the 300,000 strikers did not go back to work. The Association of Factory and Plant Owners decided to punish the workers with a lock-out of their own and the dismissal of their employees. However the commencement of the war forced the government to restore production in St Petersburg and the lock-out notices were withdrawn.

The gutter press and hack journalists played the same role then as they do now, stirring up patriotic feelings and daily condemning 'villainous Germany'. This paved the way for a series of patriotic demonstrations comprised mainly of office workers, 'society' ladies and secondary school pupils under the protection of mounted police.

REVIEWS

On 19 July general mobilisation of the St Petersburg zone was declared. In the morning thousands of workers left the factories, demonstrating against the war and turning the conscripts' departures into revolutionary protests against the war. Shlyapnikov at this time of revolutionary fever was writing a leaflet exposing the true nature of the war. This task was of the greatest importance as massive arrests of Bolshevik members of the Duma (Tsarist parliament with no real powers) at the beginning of July had resulted in a great shortage of Bolshevik organisers and propagandists. Shlyapnikov through his determination and commitment held the Bolshevik organisation together during this period of arrests and intimidation.

In the factories the mobilisation played havoc and the factory owners demanded that skilled workers return or military contracts could not be fulfilled. This request was granted and skilled workers returned but they were regarded as 'on the books' of the military governor. This was used against these workers as a threat; wages were not paid and overtime abused. Workers who protested faced removal back into the army. As the war developed the state intensified its repression against the working class.

The main socialist parties in Britain, France and Germany all supported their own ruling class at the outbreak of war. This was a hard blow to the working class and Bolsheviks in Russia, since Germany had the most developed and respected Socialist Party in the Socialist International (the body to which all Socialist parties in the industrial countries were affiliated) and it was expected to oppose the war. It was essential for the Bolsheviks to point out that the leaders of German socialism had betrayed the workers' cause and betrayed international socialism. The movement in Britain, the young Labour Party and the TUC supported British imperialism, just as today the old Labour Party and TUC supported British imperialism's adventure in the Malvinas.

In Russia itself the opportunists, led by the once-Marxist, now-Menshevik Plekhanov and the anarchist Kropotkin, called on the working class to call a temporary truce with the ruling class and support the government in its fight against 'German militarism'. But the working class supporters of the various opportunist factions were united with Bolshevik workers for the continuation of the struggle against the Russian government. The feeling of the workers was expressed in graffiti that appeared on factory walls – 'Comrades we won't be any better off if Russia wins, they'll squash us even harder'.

As the war progressed and working class opposition hardened, the opportunists were forced to alter their outright capitulation to the ruling class and dress their collaboration up in more marxist phrases. In 1915 the ruling class formed the 'War Industries Committees' and strong efforts were made to get workers' representatives on the committees. Predictably the opportunists, those socialists who supported the war against German militarism, were the ruling class's most active allies in attempting to prove that participation in the 'War Industries Committees' did not diverge from the idea of workers internationalism. They called for workers to fight to be allowed on the committees, when the ruling class was welcoming them with open arms, and to use the committees to organise anti-government demonstrations.

The working class rejected the 'War Industries Committees' following the clear lead of the Bolsheviks. As the war progressed the Bolsheviks built their influence in the working class based on their clear position against the ruling class and the inter-imperialist world war, and the dedication and organising ability of workers like Alexander Shlyapnikov.

This book is testimony to the struggle to build the Bolshevik party, with many translations of original Bolshevik leaflets, and deserves to be read by all those who wish to see the smashing of British imperialism and the building of a new socialist society.

Bob Shepherd

Available from Larkin Publications, BCM Box 5909
London WC1N 3XX. £4.95 + 70p p&p. Cheques to Larkin Publications

Poor Law: the mass arrest of homeless claimants in Oxford. By Ros Franey. Published by CHAR, CPAG, CDC, NAPO and NCCL. Price £1.95

On 2 September 1982, 283 people were arrested in a fake DHSS office in Oxford. 175 people were later charged with defrauding the DHSS – most of them were homeless unemployed people. *Poor Law* tells the story of what happened to them, the background to the arrests and makes recommendations on future treatment of homeless people. *Operation Major* – the police name for the day of arrests – is an indictment of the pernicious British state which harasses the poor and oppressed whilst allowing £4000m a year in tax evasion and denying £500m a year in unclaimed benefits to those who are entitled by law, but who are not told about their rights.

Unemployed homeless people, on 2 September 1982, were entitled to £18.60 per week – the rate is

even lower for under 18s. This is less than for any other category of claimant and ensures that the homeless remain homeless and destitute. If they were housed they would get £67.20. The only way the homeless can claim more is by finding accommodation, usually in DHSS approved hostels. It is this fact which profiteering landlords have latched onto. *Poor Law* tells of the overcrowded rooms, filth, squalor, sheds in back gardens used as bedrooms, and inedible food, for which the DHSS-approved landlords in Oxford charge £42 per week. Some are also alleged to charged an extra £5 for the letter to the DHSS confirming the accommodation, which is necessary in order to get benefit.

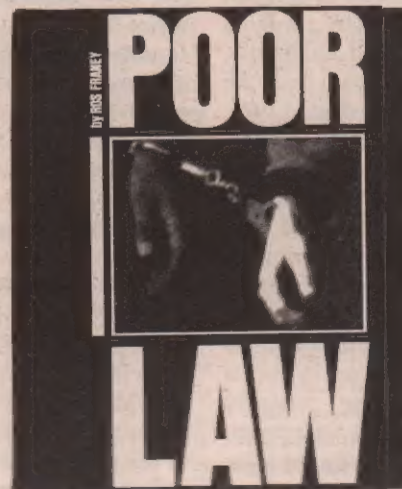
This is not confined to Oxford. Readers of FRFI will know about the vast profits of Rowton Hotels who run Arlington House and hostels like it. In 1978 CHAR complained to Leeds City Housing Department about appalling conditions and fire risks in a city hostel. The Assistant Housing Officer replied: 'We believe that to try and substantially improve the facilities and amenities at Grove Hostel would make it unacceptable as a place of shelter to the type of men who at present avail themselves of its shelter'. Three months later two men died and eleven were injured in a fire which gutted the hostel.

Little wonder that homeless people would rather sleep rough than pay through the nose for DHSS-approved squalor. *Poor Law* tells of the racket run by landlords in Oxford, where they take a share of the claimants' benefit for falsely informing the DHSS that the claimant is staying in the hostel. One landlord in Oxford admits to £28,000 a year profit but his residents feel that this is an underestimate.

Yet it was not the landlords who the police and the DHSS set out to trap on 2 September, but the homeless themselves. Indeed the landlords later appeared as prosecution witnesses. What cannot be in doubt is that the events of 2 September were a massive police/DHSS conspiracy to get publicity, with the full cooperation of the hired liars of the British press. This is what they did:

- They asked selected claimants to report to a fake DHSS office. As they left all the claimants were arrested. Even people who were not claimants but who had accompanied friends were arrested. One woman who arrived at the Office looking for her husband (who had been arrested earlier) was also held.
- The claimants were herded into rooms at the back of the office. 60 or more were held in each room, with boarded up windows and no ventilation. Many were kept under these conditions for over 10 hours.
- They were denied any access to the outside world. They were not allowed to make a phone call or to contact a solicitor, friend or family.
- Many were finger printed and photographed, including those not charged.

The treatment of the claimants on the 2 September was bad enough, but their treatment in the courts later was a conspiracy to deprive them of any justice. 175 people were charged and most of them appeared before five special courts sitting from 3pm till 11pm on 2 September. The claimants were literally railroaded through, so that even the Probation Officers and solicitors present were horrified by their treatment. One Solicitor said: 'From 3pm until 5.55pm solicitors were in the courts, making notes and talking to probation officers, basically trying to reach defendants. It was a horrible atmosphere, we were sitting there unable to do anything while the court was shelling them through. Probation officers were standing up to offer bail hostel places and were ignored. We didn't manage to have a solicitor take instructions from any defendant until 5.55pm.'

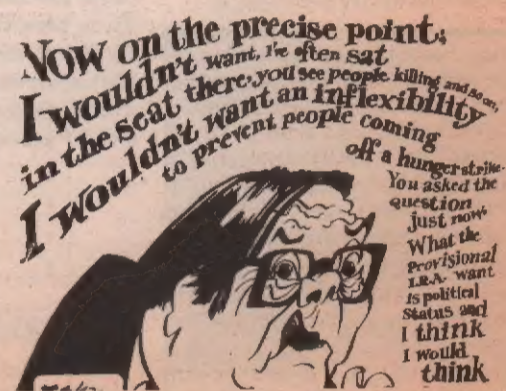


The result of this railroading was that 152 of the 175 people charged were remanded in custody. Many were advised by the police to plead guilty if they had been absent from their hostel for any reason. Because they were denied even basic rights to consult solicitors 139 people pleaded guilty, and of these 137 were given prison sentences. One man who was found guilty on a single charge had left the hostel to visit his seriously ill mother in Wigan. The magistrate gave him a 'reduced' sentence of 21 days in prison 'in view of the mitigating circumstances. Another man who served 30 days in prison for 'illegal' claims of £146, was later found to be underclaiming by the local

Claimants Union, and was owed about £1000 by the DHSS.

None of the real facts were reported in the press. Thames Valley Police, who were responsible for the operation, are old hands at manipulating their media lap-dogs. The press were tipped off in advance by the police that a big operation was going to take place and they were ready with their headlines: THE STING (*Daily Star*), AMAZING DOLE FIDDLE (*Daily Mail*), HOW THE DOLE CHEATS ARE TRAPPED (*Daily Mirror*). The press and the television told the story of an organised racket, with claimants coming from all over the country, to defraud the DHSS. They quickly developed this into their favourite nationwide witch-hunt against so-called scroungers. In fact only two people came from outside the area. In fact the arrested claimants were just trying to stay alive in the face of a system which keeps them destitute. The DHSS claimed that the operation had saved £1 ¼ million in benefit fraud and this was splashed all over the newspapers. This was a complete lie. The estimated actual fraud was £58,564 but *Operation Major* alone cost an estimated £180,546. None of the hack journalists reported this. Nor do they ever report the conditions under which social security claimants are forced to live.

Poor Law is a clear account of how the capitalist system treats the poor and oppressed. It shows clearest of all that, as the crisis develops and more people are thrown out of work, the police and all the repressive apparatus of the state are being used against the poor, the oppressed, the unemployed and homeless. One of those arrested says in the foreword to the pamphlet 'It's made me realise that if you're out of work or drawing benefit you aren't classed as a human being any longer. You are just a government statistic which can be spied on, attacked, arrested, persecuted and used whenever and for whatever reason the bureaucrats and the capitalists think up.' Carol Brown



Troublesome Business: The Labour Party and the Irish Question. Geoff Bell. Pluto Press. 168pp. Pb £4.50.

Geoff Bell (formerly IMG and now Labour Party) is one of a growing number of middle class socialists engaged in a desperate effort to convince people – against all the evidence – that the Labour Party can be won to an anti-imperialist stand on the Irish struggle for national liberation. Everyone knows the phrase 'to damn with faint praise'. Bell sets out to do the opposite: to save the Labour Party with faint criticism. However, to resurrect the Labour Party he must first bury Marx.

Marx and Engels established the basis of the Communist standpoint on Ireland – particularly the crucial point that Ireland is the key to the British revolution:

... it is the special task of the General Council in London to awaken a consciousness in the English workers that for them the national emancipation of Ireland is no question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment, but the first condition of their own social emancipation.' (Marx and Engels, *Ireland and the Irish Question* p408)

For Bell, with all the arrogance of the truly ignorant, Marx and Engels' 'premises' were 'proven questionable' (p4) and further 'However sound these judgements may have been at the time they were bypassed by events'. He ends on a lofty note patronising and superior:

'Whatever the theoretical failings of Marx and Engels on Ireland, both of them did display an enthusiasm, even at times an infatuation [a "vulgar trait" which Mr Bell certainly does not share], with the struggle taking place there.' (p5)

In the light of this middle-class socialist contempt for the Marxist standpoint it is necessary to restate Marx's position and its relevance today.

Marx examined the concrete relationship between Ireland and Britain and derived his conclusions from that examination. Firstly, the ruling class in Britain was based on an alliance between the bourgeoisie and the old landed aristocracy. This aristocracy had its 'entrenched outposts' in Ireland (see Marx and Engels pp406/407). Therefore, for this and other reasons, the national oppression of Ireland was crucial to the British ruling class. Secondly the national oppression of the Irish created a division in the British working class between Irish and English workers to benefit the ruling class. It allowed the ruling class to provide a relatively superior position for British workers as against the Irish – 'This antagonism is the secret of the impotence of the English working class, despite its organisation.' (M&E p408). The oppression of Ireland at once united the ruling class and divided the working class.

For Marx the national liberation struggle in Ireland was a revolutionary struggle because it combined the national struggle with the struggle against the landlords mobilising the oppressed Irish masses against the British ruling class. Fenianism was a 'lower

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Q: The Salvadorean regime has been trying to convince international opinion that the guerrilla has been annihilated, and yet the FMLN has just launched a strong offensive in several of the country's provinces. Would you explain how this situation has been achieved?

A: At the beginning of 1981 our revolution underwent a qualitative advance and our war entered what we term *the phase of increasingly intense military and insurrectional battles for the seizure of power*. This is a whole phase, a whole stage. The enemy has tried to misrepresent this, saying that we had begun a 'final offensive'.

Following the January 1981 Offensive the Reagan government and the Pentagon implemented a policy that aimed to destroy the Salvadorean revolutionary movement within two or three months. This was a total failure in spite of the Reagan government's provision of enormous military aid at every level to enable its puppet army to achieve this strategic objective. During the course of 1981 the army, with the support of Pentagon advisers, launched no less than 46 major military offensives, each involving between one and six thousand soldiers. Some of our zones had to resist ten or twelve of these offensives, which they call 'cleaning-up operations'. These operations besides aiming to destroy the guerrilla also have the objective of eliminating the civilian population. And the reality is that tens of thousands of women and children have died under their bombs, from gases and from the bacteriological weapons that the enemy has been using against our liberated zones.

By the end of last year the army had trebled its numbers of combat troops from a force of 11,500 it has climbed to 34,000. Nevertheless the great majority of these troops have had to be stationed in fixed positions, with the result that the army's mobile forces have become small and very ineffective. By the end of last year their new mobile brigade, the 'Atlacil' brigade, had lost one third of its troops as casualties.

'we are winning this war'

Q: After successfully resisting the enemy offensive, when and how did the FMLN take the initiative in military actions?

A: December was the month when the FMLN took the initiative away from the army. The forces that make up the FMLN had been improving their co-ordination, both between each other and in terms of timing. This was increasing the attrition against the enemy, especially in the first three months of this year when the army's troops were at the same time suffering acute demoralisation because the strategy for destroying the guerrilla was not working. Quite the reverse, our forces were improving, acquiring the structure of a revolutionary army.

In the first three months we attacked fixed enemy positions in various places: from San Fernando and San Ignacio in Chalatenango province to Perquin and San Fernando in Morazan province... This destruction of small enemy positions meant that our forces had improved their operational ability, annihilating increasingly greater numbers of enemy soldiers and capturing larger quantities of armaments. Our forces are fighting with the rifles we have captured from the enemy. In all honesty we can say that our principal source of arms, our sole supplier at this stage, is the Reagan government. We are fighting with M16 and G3 rifles, with North American mortars, that they sent to the puppet government. Every month we make a balance of our actions and of the number of arms captured from the enemy and it is now never less than one hundred arms, including some mortars, machine-guns of various calibres and 57mm and 90mm cannons.

By December 1981 the improvement of co-ordination and the experience of a

INTERVIEW WITH

SALVADOR CAYETANO CARPIO

FMLN COMMANDER

Salvador Cayetano Carpio is one of the main political-military leaders of the FMLN in El Salvador. He gave this interview at the end of October 1982, during the latest FMLN offensive, in a liberated zone of Chalatenango province. This translation was first published by the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign.

The considerable military advances and consolidation of the FMLN armed forces described here have been confirmed again in the past 4 months. The US-backed El Salvador army has failed to halt the FMLN offensive begun in October and continues to lose territory, weapons and men. This has led to severe demoralisation and divisions within the army. The January mutiny by the military commander of Cabanas province, Colonel Ochoa Perez, was only the latest and sharpest expression of such splits. Allegedly a split over military tactics, with Ochoa Perez pressing for widespread adoption of US counter-insurgency warfare, the mutiny reflects a serious crisis of confidence in the army. The fact is that Ochoa's favoured tactics have been tested and have failed in the FMLN strongholds in Chalatenango and Morazan. Ochoa can only claim credit for counter-insurgency warfare in Cabanas because the FMLN is not yet strongly established in that province!

The reality is that with a close and organic connection between the revolutionary armed forces and the worker and peasant masses, the El Salvador army, however well armed and trained in counter-insurgency by US imperialism, will find it impossible to defeat the revolution. US imperialism is therefore resorting to additional methods – the transformation of Honduras 'into a base for aggression in Central America'. But as Salvador Cayetano Carpio states:

'The Salvadoran people with their heroism, aided by the other struggles of the other peoples, will achieve their freedom.'

whole year's fighting produced a qualitative improvement in our troops. At the end of 1981 our fighters had acquired a much greater military ability. Our leaders, from platoon commanders upwards, had been gaining greater skill in manoeuvres, more skill in directing troops and a better understanding of battlefield tactics.

Q: While at the same time the north American government was announcing that the Salvadorean army had been perfected...

A: In the first months of 1982 the government repaired the Atlacil brigade, and formed the Atonal brigade, while the Ramon Belloso brigade was trained in the United States. Reagan's military aid also modernised the navy and the communications system, provided the army with greater air power including Huey helicopters which are designed for airlifting troops. The debut of the three mobile brigades took place in June. On May 28th, supported by several infantry regiments, the three mobile brigades began an operation in Chalatenango province. The FMLN counter-attacked, besieging San Fernando and Perquin in Morazan and forcing the redeployment of the three brigades to this province. At the same time the Honduran army occupied territory inside El Salvador in the area of Perquin and attacked southward in two pincers. The main attack by the Salvadorean regime's mobile forces was launched northwards up the highway.

The FMLN's response was such that during June, in the actions we realised in Chalatenango, Guazapa, San Salvador, Usulután, Morazan and in some areas of San Miguel province, we captured more than 250 arms and inflicted 500 casualties on the enemy army, principally in the US trained brigades. Instead of achieving the turning point of the war, which for months the Reagan administration had been hoping to achieve, all that they managed was to lose an enormous number of arms and soldiers above all from their elite mobile brigades, while

the revolutionary forces improved their operational ability. Colonel Castillo, the Vice-Minister of Defence, was also captured during these operations. At the end of June the situation in the army was one of demoralisation, desertions, confusion and disagreements, which was reflected in the regime's internal policy.

Since then the revolutionary forces, whose co-ordination at a national level has been constantly improving, have been increasingly taking the initiative leading up to these attacks in October.

Q: What have been the most outstanding aspects in the recent development of the revolutionary armed forces?

A: Firstly that the revolutionary forces in El Salvador are no longer small guerrilla units dispersed throughout the Republic and carrying out harassment operations against the regime's army, instead they are increasingly becoming regular forces. This change has been

It should also be pointed out that our zonal commanders have acquired the ability to direct large numbers of troops – involving up to several hundred fighters – in each zone. This was outstanding in the March offensive. The zonal commanders have learnt to direct not just a single operation but to conduct within a large geographical area all of the military support operations needed to carry out the main operation.

For their part, with more training and with more experience as regular forces, the revolutionary fighters have acquired a great experience and skill in the military art.

Q: In what state is the enemy army?

A: It has been expanded, it now has 34,000 soldiers. The number of its mobile brigades has grown. However if a balance of the war's development is made, it is in favour of the revolutionary forces. This is the fundamental trend of the Salvadorean process.

The size of the regime's army has grown, but at the same time it has been obliged to disperse its forces. Its expanded elite forces certainly have received much more training, have a greater operational capacity and are air-mobile. Nevertheless these forces are being progressively out-paced by the FMLN's forces.

Q: What is the fighting ability of the FMLN?

A: The FMLN, all of the forces that compose it, all of its members, all of its fighters, have improved qualitatively. At the moment we are entering a stage of greater combat mobility and a level of accumulation of forces that enables us to strike hard. Last year we could only dream of annihilating a company of troops in transit, and yet in June this year we destroyed a company travelling to reinforce Perquin and San Fernando. We captured 43 soldiers and many arms in an ambush that was brilliantly executed. Currently we have achieved a level of firepower and a sufficient number of revolutionary troops to destroy enemy companies that are defending heavily fortified positions. On October 10th, in less than 24 hours, the comrades annihilated an enemy company in El Jicaro while simultaneously a force of 25 National Guard and 30 paramilitaries, all heavily armed, was attacked in Las Vueltas. The comrades destroyed one and a half companies.

'The popular liberation war in El Salvador is part of a process of revolutionary struggle involving all the Central American peoples'

achieved through continuous fighting.

During the course of this year we have been converting our revolutionary slogan 'the offensive against the counter-revolutionary troops continues, in all places and always increasing' into reality.

We have managed to combine small and medium actions with period campaigns and offensives. Military actions have been combined with raising the masses' readiness for insurrectional actions.

The revolutionary leadership has improved considerably in its ability to plan continuous operational activity within a strategic perspective, and in conducting united large-scale operations and campaigns, combining all of the sophistication necessary in the different fields of combat.

Q: What is the significance of the capture of these positions?

A: The capture of El Jicaro and Las Vueltas is very important because it extends the territory controlled by the revolutionary forces right up to the gates of the provincial capitals and also deprives the enemy of two strategic positions.

The puppet army, directed by imperialism, continues insisting that it will 'destroy the guerrilla' but now they are saying 'within two years'. With this aim they are employing new tactics to improve their operational scope: more mobility and more air transport. Within a few days the Reagan government is going to provide them with over 20 warplanes; eight Huey helicopters, six Cessna 43 aircraft that can carry 56 soldiers and use improvised airstrips, as

well as reconnaissance aircraft. They have trained pilots in the US Southern Command base in Panama to use napalm, and at present the Salvadorean airforce has many bombs of this type. The US has already sent gunboats that three weeks ago were used in operations on the coasts of Usulután and San Vicente provinces.

Despite all of this our forces and our people are proving that they have sufficient strength not only to resist the present levels of US intervention but to defeat it.

Despite the enormous aid of imperialism we know that the puppet army is being worn down. We are confident that our people are building some truly powerful forces. Forces that are going to be able to make a strategic advance in the military and insurrectional sense, that imperialism will be unable to defeat and that will enable our people to achieve their liberation, democracy and a just peace.

Q: And if the US intervenes directly?

A: We know that in the final instance imperialism could do the insane and invade El Salvador, as they did in Vietnam when their puppets could no longer hold back the people. Imperialism is also creating the conditions to attack the Sandinista popular revolution. Honduras is being converted into a base for aggression in Central America.

But at the same time we know that our way is not an isolated phenomenon. The popular liberation war in El Salvador is part of a process of revolutionary struggle involving all of the Central American peoples. This is a huge movement with a very different quality to a few years ago. The event of the Nicaraguan Revolution has been a turning point in the history of Central America and imperialism cannot any longer contain this popular struggle for liberation, independence, sovereignty and democracy.

Q: How do you see the possibility of negotiation between the regime and the revolutionary forces in El Salvador?

A: We are sincere when we say that our war has to end with a political settlement, because every war ends in this way. Every negotiation must be based on the satisfaction of our people's basic interests.

They are not defeating us. We are little by little, step by step, defeating the imperialist manoeuvres in the political and military fields. And we are winning this war. I am not saying that we have already won, but that as it develops conditions are being created – conditions that are increasingly more favourable – to turn the balance of forces in favour of the people and their political and military forces. Of this we are certain, and this is the reason for Reagan's desperation.

But we are immersed in a Central American process, and we know that Reagan has a plan for the whole region. We know that Reagan's policy is to regionalise his aggressions. In this framework our revolutionary struggle – and all of the Central American peoples can be absolutely confident of this – will perform its role with honour in the framework of our modest and hard-working peoples who desire their freedom and independence.

The Salvadorean people with their heroism, aided by the struggles of the other peoples, will achieve their freedom. The events of 1982 demonstrate the will, the commitment and the determination that this will happen.



USA poverty declared a human emergency

action must be taken—official

The looting and stealing of the wealth of other countries, the political control by force of other countries, and the deliberate restriction and prevention of the economic development of national economies is the character of American imperialism. American imperialism abroad is also carried on within America. Just as imperialism oppresses external nations, so it keeps the black American, and other minority groups, in a position of special oppression. In times of economic crisis, that recurring event of capitalist production, the unemployed are added to those who are kept in poverty by the system. Profitability must be restored at the cost of their health and welfare also.

USA: Unemployment rates November 1982

8.0%	White adult women
9.2%	White adult men
16.7%	Black adult women
19.0%	Black adult men
21.3%	White teenagers
50.1%	Black teenagers

In the recent period the severity of the current crisis has produced the highest rate of unemployment in the USA since the 1940s. The imperialist state, now as then, has no social scheme, no structures, no interest in helping those in poverty. But recently the call has been issued from various Federal and State bureaucrats that 'Action must be taken' to deal with the situation. The reason for this call is that the rising tide of American poverty and unemployment has swept out of the ghettos and Southern farming areas where it has always been onto the main streets of every town and city in the United States of America. US imperialism, the strongest imperialist industrial power is today unable to meet the minimum living requirements of millions of US citizens.

There are over 2m homeless people who travel round 'like ants' living in cars and lorries, parks and public places. Some are the 'new poor', whole families who have been plunged into absolute poverty by unemployment and have nothing left but a tent, maybe, or an automobile.

Others are the old, the sick, the disabled; 'derelicts', 'hobos', 'shopping-bag ladies' who live, sleep and eat in doorways, underneath bridges and in bus depots. Others still are whole communities like the steelworkers of Columbus, Ohio where two thirds of the workforce has been laid off since 1981 or the Detroit carworkers where 255,000 employees, or 23% of the blue-collar work force are on indefinite layoff. And, as always in the USA, but growing rapidly, there is the reserve pool of young labour, the black youth at 50% unemployed and the white youth at 22%.

These are the poor, the hungry, the huddled masses of America whose existence can no longer be ignored by the state authorities. 'Action must be taken' it has been declared. President Reagan spoke hopefully over Christmas of the tradition of neighbourhood caring by Americans. No doubt as a reminder some 5,000 copies of Pat Boone's recording of 'Lend a Hand, America' were sent out from the White House to radio stations over Christmas. In addition the President has set up two national advisory commissions to utilise 'voluntary' labour to combat hunger in the USA.

'Action must be taken' it has been decided also by the city bosses of Phoenix, Arizona. Here the solution to homelessness and poverty has been to close all public shelters. A law has been passed making it a misdemeanour to lie down in the parks, or on the pavements, and after seeing starving foragers searching through supermarket garbage containers, all garbage has been declared public property and sprayed with paraffin to make the food inedible.

Queuing at one of New York's five Soup Kitchens now starts at 8 in the

'Action must be taken' said the social workers when seven month old Holly Reed froze to death in December while sleeping in the car in which she lived with her parents in Denver. Indeed, the number of abused, abandoned and homeless children has soared in recent months to horrifying levels. It has been estimated that at least 20,000 children are living on New York city streets. Most are with their parents, the 'new poor' who have lost homes after losing jobs and are now living rough. But many thousands of children have been abandoned or evicted by jobless parents who can no longer afford to keep them.

Even the most caring of parents cause their children to suffer when poverty descends. In Chicago the hospitals have noted an alarming rise of 'water-intoxication' which causes fits in babies. This comes from diluting baby food with too much water in order to make it go further.

Many thousands of parents have had to make the bitter decision to put their children into care rather than see them suffer on the streets any longer. And on the streets prostitution is the only means of survival for thousands of children on their own. So, for example, the reality of Hollywood glamour is the teenage boys and girls who work for the pimps who control Sunset Boulevard. These abandoned children or 'push-outs' as they are called, join the 'runaways' who have left homes where child abuse is frequently the adult response to the overwhelming problems of poverty. Social workers report that child neglect, burnings, beatings and sexual molestation have increased rapidly in the stressful situation of unemployment.



Homes in old vans and cars soup kitchens

morning. The most recent kitchen to open in November served 30 dinners on the first day and after giving out 220 Christmas dinners had to turn hundreds of hungry people away unfed.

And this foraging for garbage and 5 hours queuing for one meal a day takes place in a country that is agriculturally the richest in the world. Last year the government paid out \$15bn in Federal aid to farmers not to grow wheat. Not only does the USA consume the most food, it destroys the most food. 20% of all food produced for human consumption is lost every year. This is food that was perfectly edible yet somehow unsaleable or unavailable. Packing sheds alone spill over with fruit that is 'cosmetically unacceptable' that is not perfect in appearance.

It is indeed a stressful—a desperate—situation to be unemployed in the land of free enterprise. The figure of 10.8% unemployment gives little indication of the human suffering it means to 13m jobless Americans and their families.

The 'Action must be taken brigade' are trying to drag some response out of those who are beginning to be personally affronted by the sights, sounds and smell of poverty on their doorstep.

But there is much more to the myth of America than the famous neighbourliness. There is the idea that people fail in the competitive jungle because they are not good enough. There is also the idea that failure is deserved. 'Why Tolerate Bums?' asks the headline of the Phoenix Sun newspaper. 'If a stray dog is found wandering on the streets, it is picked up

UPRISING IN MIAMI

The shooting of Nevell Johnson by the police while he was playing a video game led to 3 days of street fighting in Miami, USA. This was another uprising by the ghettoised black proletariat in the USA. From Watts in 1965, Newark, Washington and Detroit in 1967, and Miami in 1980, the black working class has continued its fight against US capitalism and its racist state. On 28 December, Nevell was enjoying himself in a recreation hall in the Overtown District of Miami. Two policemen approached him, spun him round and shot him in the head. When news of the shooting spread, local black people came out onto the streets to demonstrate their disgust at what had happened. The police were attacked, shops looted and vehicles set on fire. The Miami police sent in Special Weapons And Tactics (SWAT) teams to control

the rebellion. One such team shot dead a 17 year old youth. The city manager sent in a special squad of black police officers and 15 black community leaders to try and keep things under control. This racist paternalism was rejected by the people who continued their battle with the police for another 3 days. After the uprising, liberals and sociologists were rounded up to make statements concerning the causes and remedies for the uprising. State Senator Carrie Meek complained 'There's still joblessness... and there's still deprivation'. Yes, there is! And its going to get worse as the USA slips into its greatest crisis since the 1930s. The black working class along with Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in the USA will be the first to bear the brunt, but also the first to mount a revolutionary resistance. Alexis Rose/Nigel Doyle

and put to sleep,' it continues. This view of the poor as animals, sub-humans, is spreading through communities where unemployment has not yet struck. The children who live in a tent town on the outskirts of Houston, Texas, are called 'the River Rats of Tramp City' by local school children. They have clearly learnt this response to poverty and oppression from their parents who have formed Vigilante groups to chase homeless people out of the area with shotguns. No doubt these adults are standing by yet another American myth, the right of every citizen to defend his own—a right which has resulted in the death of nearly half a million Americans over the last twenty years from gunshot wounds.

As always the desperation of the poor presents a golden opportunity for the greedy and enterprising. Firms of Labour Contractors have arisen who hire workers so desperate for a job that they will enter dangerous radioactive piping to seal links. Atlantic Nuclear and General Public Utilities are two of the leading labour contractors whose recruiting officers can earn \$6 an hour and double on Sunday for providing men. The firms are called 'meat markets' by the physics staff of the USA's 73 nuclear generating stations—the workers are 'glowboys' and their job is to 'take the fry'.

The hired workers must enter or 'jump into' radioactive chambers which have been closed because of heavily contaminated leaks. For 5 minutes at a time on 3 or 4 occasions they are exposed to massive doses of radiation equivalent to a hundred medical X-rays full in the chest. They are told that they will not suffer from the dosage and 'not to worry', but none of the regular workers at the nuclear plants is prepared to take

an almost certain gamble with cancer like these desperate poor people.

The technical staff at about 40 nuclear plants in the USA expect 'tube degeneration to continue' and many more 'glow-boy jumpers' to be employed over and above the 24,000 who have already been used.

Degradation is certainly the word that applies to a society that beggars people beyond description and then abuses, insults and exploits them as imperialist America does. But people are not suffering in silence. The Grapes of Wrath are being trod and the unemployed are slowly but surely getting organised. They have to take up the challenge of a barbaric state that is cutting welfare benefits and an organised trade union movement (the AFL-CIO) that sees them as a threat to those still in work. A national staff worker for a large industrial union put it this way after insisting on remaining anonymous.

'When you get right down to it, most of the unions are frightened by the idea of mass unemployment and just wish it would go away. The unskilled and Blacks are the depression's main victims, and the thought of even a fraction of them organising to help themselves scares the hell out of us. People who haven't worked for years, who are living in tents, who have no medical aid, don't have much to lose, and that makes them very, very hard to control. If they get together nationally, or even just in one big city, they can be a powerful force. I'm not sure that it will ever happen, but if it does, watch out!'

Watch out! Revolutionary action will be taken.

Susan Davidson

FALN STRIKES IN NEW YORK

On New Year's Eve four municipal and federal government buildings were bombed in New York City by the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (Armed Forces for National Liberation FALN). The bombings included New York City's police headquarters where one policeman was seriously injured. Two other policemen were injured when another bomb exploded at the Manhattan Federal Court buildings. In all five bombs were planted by the guerrillas and only one failed to detonate. The FALN claimed responsibility for the bombing by telephoning WCBS radio with the message: 'This is the FALN. We are responsible for the bombings in New York City today. Free Puerto Rico. Free all political prisoners and prisoners of war'.

The Puerto Rican people have been oppressed by American imperialism since the United States took over control after defeating Spain in the American-Spanish war of 1898. American imperialism controls every aspect of life; economic, political and judicial. A particularly vicious form of control

over the people of Puerto Rico is the food stamp programme. Because large sections of the population are unemployed, and there is not enough work for those who are employed, the Puerto Rican people rely on welfare stamps controlled by the United States administration, to be able to feed themselves. American imperialism has deliberately left Puerto Rico underdeveloped and this in turn has meant that many have left Puerto Rico to savour the delights of the American 'Dream'—more unemployment and racism. Two million Puerto Ricans live in New York City alone! But the Puerto Rican people are fighting back. Political parties, feminist groups, trade unions and students are forming coalitions in the fightback against US imperialism. In 1975 the First International Conference of Solidarity with the Independence of Puerto Rico was held in Havana in Cuba to unite various groups in their struggle.

The FALN are the armed wing of this struggle. They first came to light in 1974, and since then have claimed responsibility for over one hundred bombings from Chicago to New York and from Washington DC to San Francisco. The guerrilla army has been inactive for two years since the arrest of 11 top members in 1980. But minor setbacks will not defeat the Puerto Rican people. Alexis Rose/Nigel Doyle

LAMBETH TORIES ATTEMPT TO SILENCE FREE SPEECH ON IRELAND

Once again the democratic rights of the South London Irish Solidarity Committee are under attack. Last year, when the Tooting police attempted to ban SLISC from the streets of Wandsworth, SLISC fought for and won its right to hold street meetings in Balham and Tooting and upheld the democratic rights of free assembly and free speech on Ireland. The latest attack comes from the staunchest allies of the police, the Tories, and is aimed at preventing SLISC from holding meetings at Lambeth Town Hall.

On 31 December 1982, the *South London Press* carried a report which stated that Lambeth Tory councillor, Peter Davis, was attempting to ban SLISC from use of Lambeth Town Hall. Thames Television News and London's *Evening Standard* also ran reports which made it clear that the Lambeth Tories will go to any lengths to attack free speech on Ireland, whilst parading under a paper-thin veneer of 'concern for the victims of violence'. The total hypocrisy of Peter Davis and his Tory allies is revealed in a resolution he intends to put to Lambeth Council, saying they should:

'ban the use of Lambeth Council facilities to organisations which support campaigns of violence and/or are racist.'

This statement is nothing but foul hypocrisy! For which party has consistently endorsed violence and racism? None other than Peter Davis' Tory party. While the Tory party supports imperialist violence aimed at denying the Irish people's right to self-determination, SLISC opposes British imperialism and supports the right of the Irish people to self-determination. While the Tories attack black people here with the racist Nationality Act and police harassment, SLISC stands totally opposed to racism and supports the democratic right of black people to live free from racist state harassment and police attack. It is clear that Peter Davis has only included the banning of racist organisations in his motion to confuse the issue and hide his anti-democratic intention—to silence SLISC. For SLISC with its consistent record of opposition to British rule in Ireland threatens to expose the reactionary and racist violence which is the hallmark of the British state and the Tory Party.

The Tory record of hypocrisy and violence is clear. We only have to look at the Falkland Islands/Malvinas war last year where over 1,000 people died as a result of the British government's brutal war to maintain control of those islands. Then we see them conducting an enquiry, the Franks Report, in which they exonerate themselves from any blame whatsoever. In Ireland the RUC/British Army 'shoot-to-kill' squads operate freely under British Tory government direction. Here in Britain police run riot with guns on Stephen Waldorf, nearly killing him. William Whitelaw says 'no whitewash' and then we see the charade of a police officer charged with attempted murder walking free on 'unconditional bail'. Peter Davis' talk of violence is nothing but Tory hypocrisy covering Tory violence and is aimed at the suppression of democratic rights. The root cause of violence in Ireland today is the British government's denial, using massive violence, of the Irish people's right to self-determination. The

only basis for peace is the ending of British rule.

The real issue at stake is not violence but the attempt by Peter Davis and others to impose political censorship on SLISC, to silence the voice of opposition to British rule in Ireland. The government, using the racist anti-Irish Prevention of Terrorism Act, banned democratically elected Sinn Fein representatives from visiting London at the invitation of GLC councillors. Peter Davis is seeking to impose a similarly reactionary ban on SLISC in Lambeth by denying us the use of Lambeth Town Hall. Peter Davis and the press, by whipping up hysteria about SLISC, are deliberately inciting hostility and attacks on SLISC. By publicising dates of SLISC meetings, Davis and the press attempted to provoke attacks on those meetings.

The first of those meetings took place on 7 January at Lambeth Town Hall—a very successful committee meeting attended by 30 people. Many individuals and organisations responded to our call to come and discuss the proposed ban and defend the meeting. A notable exception was the RCP controlled Irish Freedom Movement—despite the fact that they too use Lambeth Town Hall, they refused to send stewards, saying they were too busy! The support SLISC did receive was welcomed, and the meeting went ahead to organise activities to fight the proposed ban. New people

came forward to join in the work and as a result a very successful SLISC street meeting was held in Clapham Junction where over £20 was collected for the committee and hundreds of people signed the 'Troops Out Now! Self-determination for the Irish people' petition. Already Ken Livingstone has signed a statement of support. Ted Knight, Lambeth Council leader, has

publicly declared 'that we have no intention of withdrawing the facilities from SLISC'. A lobby of the council meeting where Peter Davis intends to put forward his resolution has been planned. SLISC will defend its right to speak out on Ireland and will oppose all attempts at political censorship.

Pauline Sellars

BLOODY SUNDAY



The annual Bloody Sunday Commemoration March was held in Leeds on Sunday 30 January. Despite police harassment on the march, and fascist threats, the march passed off without incident. Over 1500 people were on the march led by a colour party and the St John Ogilvie flute band from Wishaw. The march was supported by Sinn Fein, IRSP, the Irish Solidarity Committees, OIPFG, TOM and the IFM.

The Irish Solidarity Committees contingent was drawn from Manchester, Edinburgh, North, West, East and South London, Liverpool and Bradford and was supported by RCG and FRFI supporters from England and Scotland. GIFAC and RCG supporters in Scotland attended the 8000 strong Bloody Sunday March in Derry on the same day.

The march met with a good response,

especially in the Chapeltown area. Many black youth joined the over 200-strong Irish Solidarity Committee's contingents.

At the rally following the march Jim McAllister, victorious Sinn Fein candidate in the Assembly elections, was greeted with rousing applause and gained a standing ovation at the end of his speech. He called for much more support and much more work in solidarity with the struggle of the Irish people. Other speakers included Sinn Fein (Britain), Women and Ireland, and 2 RCP/IFM speakers. Despite the mobilising committee's earlier decision that the Irish Solidarity Committee's would have one speaker to represent all the committees, Eddie Caughey of Birmingham Sinn Fein, along with the IFM, overturned this decision and the ISCs were refused speaking rights.

Brutal attack on Armagh women

Republican women prisoners of war are being subjected to ever-increasing brutality and sadism in Armagh prison. Governor Murtagh has interpreted prison rules to subject the POWs to a wide range of punishments: long periods of solitary confinement; loss of remission; stopping of parcels, letters and visits; withdrawal of education facilities and isolation of Republican POWs in small groups among loyalist prisoners.

The 'offences' for which these punishments have been handed out include such 'misdemeanours' as turning off the television without permission and spending too long in the toilets. 'Refusal to obey orders'—however trivial or absurd the orders may be—has become a major weapon of harassment. So much for the much-vaunted 'flexible' and 'humane' interpretation of prison rules that was promised at the end of the hunger strike in 1981.

The most serious, brutal and sadistic development has been the re-introduction of the humiliating and degrading

strip-searches. Strip-searching was re-introduced on 9 November 1982. Murtagh's promise to 'review' the situation of the women if they would comply with the strip-searches—following their initial refusal to co-operate—has quickly proved to be yet another lie. On Tuesday 4 January the strip-searching culminated in a barbaric attack on three POWs—Philomena Lyttle, Catherine Moore and Lorraine Nichol. All three are remand prisoners. They were forcibly strip-searched going to and from court.

Returning from the court the three

were thrown to the ground, their arms and legs twisted, forcibly stripped, one had her sanitary towel removed, one was blindfolded with a towel throughout. The three naked women were held pinned down to the ground by warders. All three were injured: bruising to the ribs, arms and back. One had to have her ankle strapped as a result of this brutality.

These attacks signal the renewed determination of British imperialism to crush the resistance of Republican POWs and create a regime of terror in the prisons. Once again it is being resisted by the POWs. The renewed brutality in Armagh shows just how much faith can be placed on the promises of British imperialism—none at all.

Terry Marlowe

IN BRIEF

● Death threats

Francis Hurson, brother of the murdered hunger striker Martin Hurson, received his death threat from a member of 1 battalion of the Queens regiment on the night of 25 December outside his home near Carrickmore County Tyrone. One of the members of the patrol rammed his rifle into Hurson's stomach saying 'I said I'll get you'. On making a complaint at the local RUC barracks Hurson was told 'There is nothing we can do about it'.

On the same night in Lurgan, Sinn Fein chairperson Peter Corey was stopped by an unmarked RUC car just after midnight. One of the RUC men said to Corey 'We'll leave you alone tonight because you're a bit depressed as your mates are all in the graveyard. It'll not be long till you're lying with them'. In another incident outside the Lurgan Sinn Fein centre on 30 December Jim Byrne and Paul Corey were told to 'Watch your backs tonight' by an UDR foot patrol.

In Belfast members of the Black Watch Regiment are threatening to kill members of Sinn Fein. On Sunday 16 January a foot patrol from the regiment arrested Sinn Fein supporter Sean Keenan in Cavendish Street. Keenan was told that 'We know your routine. Someday you will be walking your route and it'll be the last time'. This regiment has continually harassed Keenan; hardly a day goes by without him being arrested and detained.

Alan James

● Torture

On 6 January the RUC arrested 46 year old Brian Murray from Derry under section 12 of the Emergency Powers Act and imprisoned him in Gough Barracks. Murray has just been released from hospital after treatment for arthritis of the spine which has kept him out of work for the past two years as well as leaving him needing to wear a ribbed corset and walk with the aid of a stick. Despite this disability the thugs of the RUC still beat him into giving a confession admitting to crimes he did not commit. Murray described his treatment. 'I knew he was going to knock me over as all my weight was on my right side to ease the pain in my back. The chair toppled over and fell on me and I lay in agony on the floor. He came over to me and deliberately shoved me with his foot in my back'.

While Murray was lying on the floor screaming in agony the torturers called for help and dragged him off to the cells. During another session the RUC boasted about their murder of IRA volunteers, telling Murray, 'It was McKerr we were after. We'll do you the way we did him—from head to foot. Just remember, we know your car'. After his release Murray has been under constant medical treatment by a doctor in an attempt to relieve the pain caused by the RUC thugs in Gough Barracks.

Alan James

● British and Loyalists collaborate

The British Army, RUC and UDR have always collaborated with and assisted the loyalist death squads such as the UDA and UVF in their attempts to terrorise and suppress the nationalist resistance. The trial in January of UDR man Brian Roberts revealed another example of such collaboration between official and unofficial forces of repression. Brian Roberts joined the UDR in July 1981 and within 2 months he had shot and wounded 3 nationalists and murdered another, Liam Arthur Canning. When Liam was murdered in August 1981, the notoriously barbaric Ulster Freedom Fighters, an unofficial loyalist death squad, claimed responsibility for the killing. However, during Brian Roberts' trial it was revealed that the weapon used to kill Liam was Brian Roberts' officially issued Walther pistol. Brian Roberts, whilst in the UDR, and armed with British weapons, was therefore at the time also working with the Ulster Freedom Fighters. Having changed his plea to guilty, Roberts was sentenced to life imprisonment. This will not end such collaboration which has gone on for 14 years with the full knowledge of the British government and its minions.

Eddie Abrahams

Round-up

Building an Irish Solidarity Movement

The 20 November Building an Irish Solidarity Movement Conference gave a lead to local activists and has already resulted in 6 new Irish Solidarity Committees being formed – Manchester, Liverpool, West London, East London, Dundee and Edinburgh. Involving several organisations and independent activists these have begun the hard work needed to build a solidarity movement.

● Edinburgh

Following a series of successful meetings it was decided to hold our first street meeting on 15 January on an Edinburgh council estate. The meeting was attended by 15 committee members and opened with the slogans 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!'.

Several members took it in turn to speak and tell the public the facts about life in the Six Counties and also encouraged people to come and join us and help build an Irish Solidarity Movement. Other members leafleted, held placards, supported our banner and collected signatures for the national petition. Whilst petitioning we talked with the people about Ireland and the response from the working class community was inspiring. We also talked with Irish people who were living in Edinburgh about the PTA, plastic bullets and other important issues.

We plan more meetings and a showing of 'The Patriot Game', and are at present mobilising for the 12 March demonstration in London.

Paul Nicholson

● Liverpool

In January, the Liverpool ISC held 2 successful petitioning events. These events, whilst being welcomed by local working class people, were harassed by the plain clothes police who watched throughout and called in uniformed police. They threatened to throw the 6 participants into the back of the van! The LISC supporters ignored this harassment and continued their work.

● East London

Local people from East London met on 18 January to form an East London Irish Solidarity Committee. The committee agreed to adopt the two slogans of the conference 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!' and affiliated to the Co-ordinating Committee formed by the Conference. ELISC had its first street activity in Bethnal Green on Saturday 22 January, when during 1½ hours petitioning and leafletting over 90 signatures were collected and £10 donated to its work. A full programme of street activities and public meetings is being planned.

● West London

The work of the WLISC has continued on a very promising and regular basis with street petitioning and leafletting. So far over 500 signatures have been collected on the National Petition. The committee's fortnightly meetings are now directing work towards the 12

March national demonstration. The growing committee already includes members of Hammett's Trades Council, the Unemployed Action Committee and FRFI. WLISC has affiliated to the Co-ordinating Committee and is holding a public meeting on 18 February.

Already one new committee has had to begin the battle for democratic rights which is inseparable from Irish Solidarity work.

● Manchester

The Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee, formed as a result of the 20 November conference, Building an Irish Solidarity Movement, has now established a firm footing with regular weekly committee meetings. And with weekly street activities, such as petitioning since before Christmas, it is now attracting a lot of attention. As well as collecting over a 1,000 signatures on a petition for Self-Determination to the Irish People and Troops Out Now! it has also collected over £100 in donations and spoke at an International Solidarity Front public meeting.

But Manchester City Council has been trying to censor MISC by refusing to let halls for MISC's public meetings. MISC is campaigning against this censorship and undaunted used another venue for its Bloody Sunday public meeting. The meeting received solidarity messages from OIPFG, RCL, RCG and resulted in new people agreeing to join the committee.

AM

Longer established committees have continued their public work with the focus of building the 12 March demonstration.

● North London

Since the 20 November Building an Irish Solidarity Movement Conference, NLISC has got back on to the streets with weekly meetings to build for the Bloody Sunday Commemoration March and the 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!' demonstration on 12 March. The support local people give to these street meetings is proved clearly by the 15,000 signatures NLISC has now collected on the petition. Of course there have been the usual unsuccessful attempts by the police to intimidate NLISC supporters. In one recent case the police approached a young supporter in Kilburn Square and told him to move on. Angry shoppers immediately gathered round and loudly demanded that he be left alone. The police skulked off to maintain their surveillance from a distance. But in Wood Green street meetings have not been harassed since NLISC fought for and won a free speech area.

On 27 January we also held a public meeting which was addressed by Tom McFadden, an eyewitness to the Bloody Sunday massacre in Derry in 1972. He graphically portrayed the reality of British imperialist rule in the Six Counties. We are now planning another public meeting with film show in February, more weekly street meetings, a series of educational discussions on the Irish struggle and a social evening with music. NLISC is also contacting local organisations to support the 12 March demonstration.

● Tyneside

On 20 January, Tyneside Action Committee on Ireland held a

Not quite Sebastian Coe and Steve Ovett... but FRFI runners? Sponsor them in the 1983 London marathon!



On 17 April FRFI will be fielding 2 FRFI Runners in the London Marathon, both determined to last for at least the first 15 miles. Setting their stakes high they even aim to complete the 26 mile run in under 3 hours. Encourage them through your sponsorship!

Runner 1, 40-year-old veteran David, last year completed the Marathon in 2 hours 48 minutes 30 seconds. A whole year older now he will be pleased to finish under 3 hours. Runner 2, 28-year-old Alan, despite his leg injury last year completed the run in 3 hours 14 minutes. With his leg better this time, he is determined to beat David.

Their results will be published in our May issue. Sponsor one or both and get your friends to do the same. Send for a sponsorship form to: FRFI, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX.

public meeting entitled 'The War in Ireland – Origins of the Crisis'. It brought together people to discuss the present situation and offered an analysis and discussion of the repressive measures the British army and RUC are adopting in the Six Counties. During the meeting people drew the connection between these measures and those being used by Newman at the present time in London. As a result of the meeting more people have become involved in solidarity work on Tyneside.

9 local solidarity committees have now affiliated to the Co-ordinating Committee of Building an Irish Solidarity Movement. In addition Bristol TOM has also affiliated and is organising a local public meeting to build support for the 12 March demonstration. Meanwhile on Thursday 27 January, Dundee Irish Solidarity activists held a 30 strong public meeting, following which 13 people agreed to meet the following week to establish a Dundee Irish solidarity committee.

● Port Glasgow Troops Out March

On Saturday 22 January the Clyde-side Troops Out Movement organised a march through Port Glasgow.

The march began in the Battery area and wound its way through council housing estates and down into the town centre. Many people joined the 500-strong march and there was a warm reception in the centre. Unfortunately the march dispersed without a rally. The few local loyalists who turned up to barrack were completely ignored.

The march was supported by the John Kelly, Billy Reed and Kevin Barry bands from Glasgow. The Francis Hughes Sinn Féin Cumman and one from Birmingham were also represented. The Glasgow Labour Committee on Ireland were present, and so too was the Scottish Republican Socialist Party. Once again however an occasion for unity for Irish solidarity was marred by the CTOM's refusal to allow the Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee banner to be carried.

Building an Irish Solidarity Movement



FRFI pamphlet 'Building an Irish Solidarity Movement' by David Reed

25p plus 13p p&p single copies; orders of 10 copies £2.20 post free. Make all cheques/postal orders payable to Larkin Publications. Send order to Larkin Publications, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX. Overseas orders: please pay in £Sterling or add 60p for bank charges. Why not try and take some extra copies to sell or put in your local newsagent/bookshop? Please write to us stating how many copies you want us to send.

EVENTS

5 - 11 FEBRUARY

● SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Mobilise for National Demo. 12 March. Saturday 5 February 1983. Clapham Junction. Assemble 1.45pm Clapham Junction BR station. Called by SLISC

● NORTH LONDON

FRFI Public Forum. POLICE MURDER, NO COVER UP! Tuesday 8 February 1983. Camden Labour Club 7.30pm. 2 Carol St, NW1, (nearest tube Camden Town) Admission 30p (10p unemployed). Called by North London FRFI

● LONDON

Every Wednesday 1-2pm pickets of South Africa House. Save the ANC 6. Called by SATS

● LONDON

Weekly pickets of South Africa House. Every Friday 5.30-7.30pm. Free Nelson Mandela. Free all South African political prisoners. Called by City Group AAM

12 - 18 FEBRUARY

● NORTH LONDON

Street Meeting Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Saturday 12 February 1983. Kilburn Square 11.30-1.00pm. Called by NLISC

● SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Saturday 12 February 1983. Brixton. Assemble Prince of Wales Pub. Nearest Tube Brixton, 1.45pm. Called by SLISC

● MANCHESTER

Public Forum Free Nelson Mandela! Free All Political Prisoners in South Africa! Thursday 17 February, Unicorn Pub, Church Street, 7.30pm. Manchester FRFI

● LEEDS

Public Forum Defend Free Speech! Fight Police Harassment! Thursday 17 February at 7.30pm. Chapeltown Community Centre, Reginald Terrace, Leeds 7. Called by Leeds FRFI supporters

● WEST LONDON

Public Meeting Building an Irish Solidarity Movement Friday 18 February. Hammersmith Labour Party Rooms, 446 Uxbridge Road, London W12 (nearest tube Shepherd's Bush) 7.30pm. West London Irish Solidarity Committee

19 - 25 FEBRUARY

● NORTH LONDON

Street Meeting Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Saturday 19 February 1983. Archway Tube 11.30-1.00pm. Called by NLISC

● SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Saturday 19 February 1983. Tooting Broadway tube 1.45pm. Called by SLISC

● LEEDS

Fundraising Football Match Sunday 20 February. Kick-off 2pm. Chapeltown, Potternewton Park on Harehills Avenue, Leeds 7. Leeds FRFI

● KIRKCALDY

Court Picket. Support the ASTMS 12-charged under conspiracy laws. Monday 21 February, Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court 10am.

● SOUTH LONDON

Public Forum British State Shoots To Kill! Tuesday 22 February, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton 7.30pm. Admission 30p. Called by S London FRFI

● MANCHESTER

Public Meeting Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Film show 'The Patriot Game' Thursday 24 February 7-10pm The Council Chamber, UMIST, Students Union, Sackville Street. Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee

● DUNDEE

Public Meeting Building an Irish Solidarity Movement. Thursday 24 February, Wellgate Centre 7.30pm. Dundee Irish Solidarity Committee

● SOUTH LONDON

Public Meeting Showing Patriot Game Video, Friday 25 February 1983. Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton 7pm. Video starts 7.15pm. Admission 50p. South London Irish Solidarity Committee

26 FEB - 4 MARCH

● SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Saturday 26 February 1983. Balham Tube, 1.45pm. Called by SLISC

● NORTH LONDON

Street Meeting Victory to the Irish People! Support the 12 March Demonstration! Saturday 26 February 1983 Seven Sisters Road/Holloway Road 11.30-1.00pm. Called by NLISC

● LIVERPOOL

Public Meeting to mobilise for March 12 Demonstration Thursday 3 March 7.30pm. Swan Hotel, London Rd. Called by Liverpool Irish Solidarity Committee

● BRISTOL

Public Meeting Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Thursday 3 March 7.30pm. The Swan, Stokes Croft, Bristol. Bristol Troops Out Movement

● LEEDS

Public Meeting Support 12 March Demo Thursday 3 March 7.30pm Community Centre, Reginald Terrace, Leeds 7

● BRADFORD

Public meeting Victory to the Irish People! Support the 12 March Demonstration Thursday 3 March 7.30pm. Bradford Central Library. Called by BISC

● NORTH LONDON

Public Meeting The 'Patriot Game' Friday 4 March 1983 7.30pm Islington Town Hall, Upper Street. Called by NLISC

COMING SOON

Free Nelson Mandela! Free All South African Political Prisoners! Smash Apartheid Now!

24 hour picket Friday 18 March - Saturday 19 March 5.30pm-5.30pm Outside South Africa House Trafalgar Square Called by City AAM

IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEES

● BRADFORD

Irish Solidarity Committee. For details contact BISC c/o Stary Plough Bookshop, The Left Club, 6 Edmund Street, Bradford.

● GLASGOW

Irish Freedom Action Committee meets weekly. For details write to GFIAC c/o Box 15, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

● TYNESIDE

Action Committee on Ireland meets weekly. For details write to A S King, c/o Porters Lodge, Newcastle University, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

● NORTH LONDON

Irish Solidarity Committee meets on Thursday 3 February and Thursday 17 February at Camden Labour Club, Carol St, near Camden Tube at 7.30pm For details write to NLISC, BM 4835, London WC1N 3XX

● SOUTH LONDON

Irish Solidarity Committee meets on Friday 4 February, Friday 18 February and Friday 4 March at Lambeth Town Hall, Room 29, Brixton, 7.30pm. For details write to SLISC, BM 4835, London WC1N 3XX.

● MANCHESTER

Irish Solidarity Committee. Details and information on activities can be obtained from MISC, Box 47, 164-166 Corn Exchange, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN.

● WEST LONDON

Irish Solidarity Committee meets on Friday 11 February and Friday 25 February at the Community Resource Centre, 31 Fulham Palace Rd, W6 (tube Hammersmith). For details write to WLISC, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX

● EAST LONDON

Irish Solidarity Committee meets fortnightly. For information and details write to ELISC, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX

● EDINBURGH

Irish Solidarity Committee. For details contact EISC c/o Box 110, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.

● LIVERPOOL

Irish Solidarity Committee meets fortnightly. For details write to LISC, PO Box 94 Liverpool L69 8AY

● DUNDEE

Irish Solidarity Committee - contact FRFI sellers

FRFI SUPPORTER GROUPS

● LEEDS FRFI Supporters Group can be contacted at Leeds FRFI c/o LAP 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 2. Details also from FRFI sellers.

● DUNDEE FRFI supporters Group meets on Thursday 13 January, 7-9pm Wishart Centre, King Street, Dundee.

● EDINBURGH meets fortnightly. Details from FRFI sellers or from Box 40, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

● MANCHESTER Details from local FRFI sellers

● BRADFORD Details from local FRFI sellers

● LIVERPOOL Details from local FRFI sellers

● BRISTOL Details from local FRFI sellers

● BIRMINGHAM Details from local FRFI sellers

● GLASGOW Details from local FRFI sellers

LETTERS

Please note our address is, FRFI BCM Box 5909
London WC1 3XX. SEND US YOUR LETTERS.
We welcome letters from readers but please keep
them as short as you can

Nuclear blackmail

Dear Comrades,
I think FRFI should consider the priority that must be given by the anti-imperialist struggle to opposing the new generation of medium range nuclear weapons due to be sited in Britain by US imperialism and its British agents.

Since the Bolshevik revolution imperialism has consistently sought to surround and destroy the Soviet Union. Now, incensed by the success of Soviet support for liberation movements throughout the world and spurred on by the crisis in capitalism caused by their falling rate of profit, imperialists have renewed their efforts to destroy Soviet socialism – utilising technological advances in weaponry which make it possible to accurately destroy hardened targets in a devastating pre-emptive strike.

FRFI has rightly concentrated its efforts on opposing British imperialism and supporting the struggle of the most oppressed sections of the working class – Irish people. However, Soviet support for the anti-imperialist liberation movements of the oppressed nations is an essential part of a two pronged Leninist attack on imperialism.

Should the imperialists succeed in installing their new weapons the Soviet Union would be subjected to a nuclear blackmail which would prevent their support for the anti-imperialist struggle in the oppressed nations and irreversibly set back the cause of anti-imperialism and socialism worldwide.

I hope FRFI will throw their weight behind the broad based struggle against the weapons. This would strike a blow in aid of all those oppressed peoples of the world whose victory depends on Soviet help.

Pete Smith
East Anglia

Staying alive

Dear FRFI,
Thank you for the great review of *The Boys from the Blackstuff* in your latest edition. When you're on the dole you see the system for what it is: a game of winners and losers, and don't get on the wrong side or they'll screw you down and down – and they won't pack in. It's heartless and inhuman. What can you do; go under, try and be a wide-boy or fight back?

When I read recently in a paper that the President of the New York Cotton Exchange had blown his brains out because he was worried about the state of the capitalist's banks and the US economy I thought he did an understandable and honourable thing for a dyed-in-the-wool capitalist. But when I read how doctors say unemployment causes increases in diseases, stress and suicide I call that murder.

Keep up with a great paper. The only way to stay alive, never mind healthy, is to fight back.
BJ
London

It runs in the family?

Dear FRFI,
I have just seen the film 'Gandhi' at the Odeon, Leicester Square. Many people in the audience shouted out 'Bastard' at the Brit General who ordered the massacre in India. I shouted out 'His great grandson is now Commissioner of the Met Police'.

I think it would be worth while to leaflet the audiences when they leave the cinema. I will write to BISM to see what they say.

Keep up the good work,
Comrade YA
North London

Fundamental error

A charaid,
'Fight Racism. Fight Imperialism' has many things to recommend it from a socialist and anti-imperialist viewpoint, particularly as it seems to represent the only London based Left Group that does not act as agents for Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition – the Great British Labour Party. Here is where all the revolutionary rhetoric of the Great Brit 'left' groups end with little chance of being taken seriously. Revolutionary action is to be applauded in far away places (the further away the safer for them), especially when the villain is the US of A and doesn't challenge their own chauvinist role too much.

Even Ireland is worth a bit of lip service as that is far away enough for them to feel safe. But, when those dashed Irish chaps carry the Revolution too far by bringing the struggle to their own doorstep in their Imperialist heartland of the City of London

then that is going too far. 'By gad. They'll alienate the Great British Labour Movement'.

This attitude is to ignore the reactionary history and politics of the Great Brit Labour movement which has been dealt with often enough in 'FRFI'. Rather now than deal with this wide area of agreement with FRFI as a Scottish Republican Socialist I wish to point out that the misunderstanding of the National struggles of Wales and Scotland by the RCG is a fundamental error if you are to understand the nature and role of British Imperialism in Ireland and elsewhere.

The Irish Republican Movement can appreciate the Celtic breakup of the British State for principled as well as tactical reasons as the struggle is older than capitalism itself. Few people would risk life and freedom for the reformist principle of a wage struggle and the perverted Brit left demands of the Right to Work for the bosses under a Labour Government with a change of heart. The Nationalist struggle

against a common oppressor is easier to identify with capitalist Imperialism and raise the consciousness against native capitalists and tame union collaborators. Perhaps this is why the Scottish and Welsh working class are less reactionary than the English working class. Perhaps this is also why the less privileged workers of the North of England are also less reactionary than the workers of the English Midlands and the South East. Certainly it is a major factor amongst young blacks in the heart of Imperialism and Racism who have no expression in the often racist Labour and Tame Union movement.

Only by properly examining the role of British Imperialism can FRFI be free to serve ALL those oppressed by the English Imperialism of the so-called left-wing of the Imperialist whole.

Yours for a Scottish Socialist Republic within a Socialist International
DA
Scottish Republican Socialist Party – Glasgow

DISCUSSION

Dear FRFI,
The call for an all out strike by the CPSA does involve many problems which in the present climate cannot be resolved. In two consecutive years there have been two national campaigns for pay rises by public employees which have both failed. The first concerned civil servants in 1981. In this campaign the Council of Civil Service Unions organised a whole pattern of selective action over a period of several months. Apart from days of action when all the departments of the civil service were involved, the brunt of the action was borne by the staff at the Inland Revenue and Computer Staff right across the Civil Service. The strike was a complete disaster. In 1982 the Health workers took action which incidentally followed the pattern of the previous civil service action. This group of workers was also defeated.

The problem arising from these defeats presents itself as how to win in the following pay round. The problems involved in both the health workers and staff who distribute benefits are very similar. It is an awful indictment of the state of affairs in the British Trade Union movement that workers in such services should have to even think about going on strike in order to achieve a pay rise that will merely protect their living standards. For reasons which have been analysed by the RCG the British Trade Union movement is a movement in name only. Within the civil service the CPSA would not call for an all out strike which includes the benefit services if there was to be real all-out strike in all other departments. However the reality of the situation is such that the most militants of the CPSA are in the DHSS and DE. To give the strike the effectiveness it needs it is a necessity that the benefit staff are involved.

The CPSA correspondent of FRFI has not dealt with the concrete problems involved in the issue, instead all she writes stems from a moralistic attitude towards civil service workers. She fails to point out modern western capitalism is organised in such a way that different groups of workers come into conflict all the time.

Of course if the CPSA were to go out on all out strike the civil

service could possibly come into conflict with the unemployed. And there can be no doubt that this state of affairs is not just unfortunate but positively disgraceful. The simple reason being that there are all sorts of forms of action which can be taken by civil servants in the benefit services which will never be considered, occupations, the running of the benefit service without any form of management etc etc. I could go on dreaming! However given the state of consciousness in the civil service, and the broader conditions in which civil servants find themselves, their only course of action is to build the most effective strike that they possibly can, and that must include the benefit staff.
Nigel Doyle
London

Dear FRFI

The front page of FRFI 21 proclaimed 'Support the Health Workers.' – No 'if' and 'buts', simply 'Support the Health Workers' and no warnings against removal of emergency cover.

Last month's FRFI (No.25) 'Notes & Comments' carried an attack on a section of low-paid workers for resolving on a course of industrial action which would hurt the oppressed and unemployed, but which they consider unavoidable if they themselves are to make ends meet. Their claim based on a flat-rate increase, shortening of scale-points and a divergence from supervisory and specialist 'unions' has not so far been argued strongly for in terms of differentials, the catching-up-with-other-sectors approach of the former 'Pay Research' system. Many Civil Service clerks are themselves in receipt of Family Income Supplement, yet a 'CPSA Correspondent' has attacked the CPSA National Delegate Conference for its overwhelming decision to involve DHSS and Department of Employment (DE) Sections in any all-out strike action backing up a National Pay Claim.

In voting for this strategy most branches have had to consider the real hardship that many of them will face without pay. After the dismal experience of selective action in '79 and '81

they have also had to realise that all-out action involving DHSS and DE is the only way they can mount an effective united campaign. In '79 unofficial indefinite action by DHSS and DE branches forced escalation of official selective action until Union HQs decided to call off the dispute so as not to disrupt the General Election. In '81 the Civil Service Strike began with a total blockade of the Irish Free State (!) and a slow escalation of action over 5½ months aimed at Government finance. Other sections especially Ministry of Defence (MoD), the largest department are simply too loyal. They won't budge at all without all out action. Action has to be built around forces that are beginning to move independent of the bureaucracy and are prepared to lead – those in the worst conditions and most democratically organised. What our CPSA Correspondent omits is that spontaneous action for adequate staffing has already been taken by DHSS clerks in Birmingham at a point where their health and the service provided to claimants has reached chronic breakdown. The slogan of these clerks in Birmingham and Oxford was 'We're on strike for your benefit', the same outlook as the NHS strikers. In Birmingham many claimants have been waiting for 5½ months for appointments others whose entitlement is not in dispute are waiting months for payments.

Our CPSA Correspondent is particularly concerned about DE Unemployment Benefit Offices (UBOs), to the extent that he fails to mention DHSS payment to those who are worse off still on Supplementary Benefit. Given this particular interest what is his opinion of industrial action at selective UBOs by clerks on half-strike pay to oppose the DE's Race checks now being introduced.

The real point to be attacking the 'Militant' chauvinists of the CPSA National Executive Committee (NEC) for is that they pose 'militant' and act 'loyal'. At a time when the Government has been turning the screw hard in DHSS and DE, with DE management attempting to impose censorship of certain types of union propaganda (against Race Checks and Tebbit's Law), the CPSA NEC has

Other side of the story

Dear FRFI,

I have enclosed £1 in hope that it will be of help to your paper.

I am 23 and unemployed and have just been released from prison after a term of 3 years, which I served 2 years 4½ months of.

I got your paper *sneaked* in to me in prison and I think it's great to get the other side of the story. I will reward that – it's great to get the truth.

I take your paper into pubs – the lot – and proudly show it to the remarks of 'tut, tut, commie bastard'. I couldn't care less and will send you £1 every copy I receive. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!

JL

PS Incidentally all loyalists whom I was in prison with, *still* crawl and grovel to the crown when in jail. I feel sick to see such blindness.

CPSA – all or nothing

quite deliberately undermined the fightback in these sections, and the turning of sympathy from other CPSA sections into active support. Most important of all, they have broken the solidarity and unity of interests, established between DHSS strikers on no-pay and claimants, based on a fight for jobs and services.

Left poses, and principled noises commanding the sea to go back are quite pointless and doom us to irrelevance – sniping from the sidelines self-righteously with nothing real to offer. Communist answers exist and must be got across which are not just 'morally' but practically correct – the same answers as during the Heath Strike: Build support for the fightback of the most oppressed and most advanced and you create working-class solidarity, and the basis for a wider fightback.
FRFI Supporter
Edinburgh

WINTER FUND DRIVE

FRFI NEEDS £500 PER ISSUE

Over the past six weeks the Winter Fund Drive raised £405. Our thanks go to all who contributed – either individually as Mr Knott and other supporters or through the organised effort of our FRFI Supporter Groups.

North London FRFI again tops the list with £129, followed by South London £76.30, Edinburgh £66, Leeds £56.35, Manchester £37.05, Bradford £15.35, Liverpool £8.55, Bristol £6.10 and lastly Dundee £4.55.

Though balanced this time by the great effort made for the Special £500 Fund we must remind readers that £500 is needed regularly every month to keep the paper going without raising its price. If the price went up many readers could then no longer afford to buy it. Act now by subsidising FRFI! Send us your donations or hand it to your FRFI seller. Organise fund raising events – socials, jumble sales, collections.

We will publish all contributions to the FRFI fund in this column. If you want your name or that of your organisation mentioned alongside the donation please say so.

Make your donation payable to 'Larkin Publications' and return to: FRFI BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX

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HANDS OFF IRELAND

British murder squads strike again

It is no coincidence that under the direction of ex-torturer-in-chief Newman, the 'shoot-to-kill' policy has come to London with the attempted murder of Stephen Waldorf by the Metropolitan police. However it has to be said that the justified outcry about this incident has not been matched by a similar outcry about the murder of seven nationalists by the RUC/British army since 11 November 1982.

Since 12 December 1982 when the RUC murdered INLA volunteers Seamus Grew and Roddy Carroll, the RUC/British army 'shoot-to-kill' murder squads have struck three more times killing one nationalist, wounding another and, in a bizarre twist, wounding an RUC officer. The open deployment of these murder squads by the British government is British imperialism's response to the victory of Sinn Féin in the Assembly elections of last year. FRFI has always stated that British imperialism can only respond with terror to the political victory of Sinn Féin. This fact is confirmed by the spate of murders and attempted murders by the British imperialist 'security' forces since 11 November 1982. The latest series of such attacks has claimed seven lives in two months. Their purpose is clear to all but the most corrupted supporters of British imperialism: it is terror aimed at crushing the resistance of the nationalist people following the failure of the Assembly to fool the people into giving up their struggle. This fact is confirmed, according to the *Irish Times*, by an RUC source who has declared that the new policy is, indeed, a deliberate response to the Assembly election Sinn Féin victory. Behind the facade of 'democracy' and 'elections' stands the reality of murder and terror: the only means

whereby British imperialism can maintain its stranglehold on the people of Ireland.

Patrick Elliot was murdered by a British army 'shoot-to-kill' squad on Monday 27 December in Andersonstown Road West Belfast. Patrick Elliott was attempting to rob a fish and chip shop when the army murderers attacked. He was unarmed and running away when he was shot dead. A witness to the murder, Gerry McGivern, recounts that there was no warning, that he himself was nearly shot although holding his son in his hands at the time, that he was ordered to get away from the body although he is a qualified nurse and, finally, he was arrested by the RUC and held for over two hours. This arrest was an attempt to allow the usual British army lies to be circulated before his evidence could be heard. The British lies were the standard ones about the victim being armed and so on. These lies are not worth examining.

Kieran Leonard, 25 years old, was the next victim. On Wednesday 29 December an SAS-style British army murder squad had staked out a landmine in Donagh County Fermanagh. Kieran Leonard, on his way home through the fields, was approached by a semi-circle of British soldiers. Knowing the murderous character of the 'security' forces

Kieran Leonard jumped through a hedge in fear of his life. He was then shot in the chest without any warning. He was bound hand and foot, dragged bleeding to a tree and tied to it. The British army 'defenders of the peace etc' then beat and kicked their victim. To cover up their murderous activities the British army terrorists have since arrested and charged Kieran Leonard.

Finally, on Monday 10 January, the 'shoot-to-kill' squads got tangled up with each other, resulting in the shooting of an RUC officer. An undercover RUC car was chasing another car towards a checkpoint in West Belfast, no doubt with the idea of claiming more nationalist victims. The British soldiers at the checkpoint seeing their opportunity for another kill opened fire and hit the RUC car wounding a plainclothes RUC officer in the car.

British imperialism can only rule the Six Counties by terror—sometimes open, sometimes disguised. When elaborate tricks such as the Assembly fail to fool the nationalist people, British imperialism returns to naked terror. Its one and only rule is to do whatever it can to crush resistance to its domination. Its hired killers and their PR service—the British media—are always ready with 'explanations' of their murders. No one should listen to these 'explanations' which are all lies. The only 'explanation' is that British rule in Ireland can only be maintained by terror. The only 'remedy' is the destruction of British imperialist rule in Ireland.

Terry Marlowe

IRA RESISTANCE

The IRA has continued to hit back against British imperialist terror in the Six Counties.

On Thursday 6 January 1983 an IRA Active Service Unit set up a well-organised trap outside the Post Office in the village of Rostrevor. The trap drew out into the open an RUC Divisional Mobile Support Unit which was known to be operating in the area in an unmarked car. When the RUC killers appeared they found themselves confronted by armed Republicans—not defenceless ones. The IRA ASU opened fire killing two RUC officers and wounding a third. The ASU then escaped safely. The operation was a successful response to the RUC's role in 'shoot-to-kill' operations since last November and demonstrates the ability of the IRA to deal with the RUC's latest terror tactic.

On Sunday 16 January Belfast Brigade IRA Volunteers executed 56 year old Judge William Doyle in the middle-class Malone area of Belfast. The fact that Doyle was a Catholic confirms the fact that the IRA's operations are not based on religion but are directed against all those who operate the system of British imperialist rule. Doyle as a Judge in the British imperialist system of 'justice'—aimed solely at imprisoning Republicans—was an agent of British rule and therefore executed.

These two operations, along with a number of attacks on security forces targets and economic bombings have shown the continuing ability and unbroken determination of the IRA to resist British imperialist rule.

Terry Marlowe

26 Counties: repression and poverty

The new Coalition government of the 26 Counties, brought to power by the treachery of the Irish Labour Party, has already shown its colours. The Fine Gael/Irish Labour Party government in their first Cabinet meeting made clear their determination to serve their British imperialist masters by banning INLA.

The ban on the Irish National Liberation Army is designed to allow greater scope to the Coalition government to attack and repress all forces of opposition to British imperialist domination of Ireland.

Its repression against the Republican forces was quickly followed up by further attacks on the Irish working class. On Friday 13 January the Coalition announced increases in the price of petrol, tobacco and drink, increases which will hit the working class hardest. The

fact that these increases have been imposed in advance of a budget, on 5 February, which itself will be the most vicious yet seen in the 26 Counties, is an indication of the economic collapse of the Free State. It is also further evidence that the 'solution' to this collapse as far as the pro-imperialist rulers of the Free State are concerned is poverty, poverty and yet more poverty for the Irish working class.

James Martin

RCP use violence to stifle debate

The following are extracts from a joint leaflet produced by the Revolutionary Communist Group and Revolutionary Communist League, after a number of comrades were violently assaulted by Revolutionary Communist Party/Irish Freedom Movement stewards at the Irish Freedom Movement conference in Leeds on 29 January.

'...In a workshop session on "Reports back from Ireland" the RCP platform brazenly refused to allow RCG, Workers Power and ISC supporters to defend themselves against at least six slanderous attacks on their organisations and their work. Included in these attacks was a statement by Mike Freeman, of the RCP, that the 12 March National Demonstration called by the 20 November 1982 Building an Irish Solidarity Movement Conference, was irrelevant and opportunist. When RCG members protested at this reactionary and undemocratic behaviour, they were—without warning—pounced upon by at least ten stewards. One comrade was punched in the face, and had his head butted into a door; another comrade, who suffers from ulcers, had his stomach violently kicked and his coat ripped.

In immediate disgust at the RCP behaviour, some twenty people walked out of the hall. Subsequently, RCG comrades were denied further entry into the main conference hall.

The RCP behaviour in stifling debate with physical violence is hardly different from the methods used by the police when they try and drive us off the streets of this country... Democrats, anti-imperialists and communists condemn the RCP's police-like methods. We are seeking to build the broadest possible support for the Irish liberation struggle. We attended the IFM conference to participate

in constructive debate, and to invite them to support and participate in the 12 March National Demonstration calling for VICTORY TO THE IRISH PEOPLE! TROOPS OUT NOW! ...'

The IFM is a blatant front organisation for the RCP. The RCP's use of thuggery to prevent political debate is only the inevitable logic of its sectarianism. They do not wish to build a real solidarity movement drawing in all forces opposed to British oppression in Ireland. They merely wish to use the Irish issue to build their own organisation. This was proved by the IFM/RCP's refusal to support the 12 March National Demonstration, and their sudden announcement near the end of the conference that the RCP intends to hold a national rally on the same day—12 March—in London.

We call on all genuine supporters of the Irish struggle to refuse to work with the IFM/RCP unless it renounces its sectarian methods and joins with other forces to build a principled democratic and united solidarity movement so desperately needed in this country.

Mobilisation for the Saturday 12 March demonstration is now well under way. Irish Solidarity Committees throughout the country have begun organising street meetings and public meetings to build the demonstration. The Co-ordinating Committee for Building an Irish Solidarity Movement has contacted scores of individuals, political groups, Troops Out Movement branches and Labour Party wards inviting them to join the demonstration calling for 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!'

Aside from the ISCs, the RCG and RCL sponsors for the demonstration already include Ray McLoughlin, Irish POW, East Twickenham Labour Party, Charlie Rossi GLC Labour Councillor, Bob Crossman and Keith Venness, Islington Labour Party Councillors, and many others.

The Co-ordinating Committee has also invited Owen Carron MP and Sinn Féin member, to address the rally at the end of the demonstration. Other speakers include Helen O'Brien, sister of an Irish POW, and Michael Holden, Sinn Féin member and shop steward.

In the coming month all effort and energy will be put into winning the widest possible support for and participation in the demonstration. All supporting organisations will have full speaking rights and the Co-ordinating Committee is happy to send speakers to any part of the country. For information, leaflets or speakers please write to CC BISM, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX.

Build support for the demonstration

VICTORY TO THE IRISH PEOPLE

TO ARMA

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

Victory to the Irish People!

Troops Out Now!

Saturday 12 March 1983

Assemble 1.00pm at Bidborough Street (nearest rail and tube station Kings Cross/St Pancras) Write for leaflets and posters to CC BISM, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX Organised by 20 November 1982 Building an Irish Solidarity Movement Conference.